

FORMATTING COMMENTS

1. The formatting in html has been followed as closely as possible from the photocopy of the source article, but with some concessions made to what works better and easier in html.
2. Paragraph indention has been consistently replaced with double-spacing between paragraphs.
3. Short horizontal bars have been added as needed, particularly for correspondence to make it easier to see where one letter stopped and the next began.
4. Generally, superscripting of abbreviations, characteristic of 18th century handwriting, had been removed in the printed source article. These superscripts have been added back in the html version in an effort to regain what is believed to be their original appearance as closely as possible, and to regain the sense of what was being said and abbreviated.
5. Page numbers have been centered and have brackets added.

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HORATIO GATES

Major General in the Army of the United States of America

[This picture by Lossing is very similar to that which appeared in the magazine.]

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THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

1780

GATES AT CAMDEN

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THE first connected account of the Southern campaign of 1780 was that included by Dr. Ramsay in his History of the Revolution of South Carolina, published in 1785; [\[1\]](#) the next that of the Rev. Dr. Gordon, which appeared in 1788 [\[2\]](#). A comparison of these two histories shows that many of the passages descriptive of this particular period are verbally identical. At first, sight it would seem that Gordon adopted the account presented in the earlier volume. But as Gordon in his foot notes repeatedly acknowledges his indebtedness to Dr. Ramsay for information concerning the operations in the Carolinas, yet omits any such acknowledgment in his description of the Southern campaign, there is a fair presumption that the omission was not without reason. That reason seems certainly to be that the account given by Ramsay was furnished to him by Gordon. Dr. Ramsay in 1809, subsequently to the publication of Gordon's history, published a History of South Carolina [\[3\]](#), in which the campaign from Hillsborough to Camden is related in substantially the words of his earlier work. Gordon, in a note to his third volume (p. 59), says that "General Gates' letters were examined by him at [Traveler's Rest] his Seat in Virginia the latter end of 1781." The friendly relations existing between Gates and the worthy historian are well known, and it is not unfair to suppose that he was inclined to give the most favorable coloring possible [on] the conduct of the hero, whose well-won laurels had been blighted in a disaster, the completeness of which was [illegible] of the earlier triumph. Gordon says elsewhere (in a note to his second volume, p. 450) that in compiling his narrative "recourse had been had to a detail of facts written by the deputy adjutant general, Col. Otho H. Williams, [\[4\]](#)" who was himself a prominent actor in the scenes he relates.

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Gordon's is, therefore, the earliest most authentic account, and should, unless disproved by contemporaneous evidence, take precedence and authority over all subsequent to it, from the fact that the author had opportunities for knowledge of this particular branch of the history of the war which have been since closed to all others. A few words will suffice to establish the truth of this statement. General Gates died at his estate, Rose Hill, his residence in New York City, in April 1806. By his will, proved 15th of the same month, he devised to his wife his entire property, real and personal, without reservation. Mary, his widow, survived him until 1810. By her will, proved December 10th of that year, she made numerous bequests; among others, one of the following words: "To Joel Barlow, Esqr., I bequeath all public papers in my possession, in the full confidence that he will use them for the purposes of impartial History, and to enable him to give a fair and correct account of the American revolution, and of the persons concerned in carrying it into effect." These papers, of a

voluminous nature and great variety, were for a long period in the hands of Dr. Jared Sparks, who made free use of them in his histories; later they were passed into the keeping of the New York Historical Society where they now are. An important part of the Gates papers, however, was not, and is not, comprised in this collection^[5]. This includes among other valuable documents such as the series of original commissions borne by General Gates, his Letter Book containing copies of all the [official letters written by him while in command of the Southern army](#), and his [Book of General Orders issued during the entire campaign](#). These valuable papers were accidentally found by Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet of New York City in the garret of the house of his grandfather of the same name about two years since. Thomas Addis Emmet, the famous counselor, was the legal adviser of General Gates. For what reason these documents were separated from the others is not now known. There may have been no reason. But this is of small consequence, since Dr. Emmet freely consents to their publication. They made part, undoubtedly, of the documents examined by Gordon at Traveler's Rest in 1781, but it is not probable that they have ever since fallen under the eye of any other historian. So much of these precious documents as relates to the period from the 21st June 1780, when Gates, from his home in Berkeley county, Virginia, addressed his letter of acceptance of command to the President of Congress, to the 31st August, when he was again at Hillsborough, a defeated, humiliated man, endeavoring

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to build up the remains of his broken army, is now for the first time made public. The sources from which Gordon drew his information having been thus indicated, his narrative, in view of the rarity of the history which contains it, is now given in full.

"Upon gen. Lincoln's being made a prisoner at Charles Town the command of the forces of the southern district devolved on Baron de Kalb. His experience and abilities were allowed to be great; but as he was a foreigner, unacquainted with the country, and unaccustomed to the temper of undisciplined troops, who were to constitute the major part of the army, these and other reasons wrought in favor of gen. Gates, who was considered in common as the best qualified for the command; and it was unanimously resolved in congress on the 13th day of June that major gen. Gates do immediately repair to and take command of the southern department; the next day he was empowered to take such measures for the defense of the southern states as he might think most proper. He received the resolves of congress at Traveler's Rest in Virginia, a few miles from Shepherd's town, on the 20th, and set out on Monday the 26th. He soon felt for himself, finding that he succeeded to the command of an army without strength, of a military chest without money, of a department apparently deficient in public spirit, and in a climate that increases despondency, instead of animating the soldier's arm. He had before him the most unpromising prospects his eyes ever beheld. He arrived at the camp on the 25th of July; and at a review of the troops the next day, was in every respect received by the Baron with marks of great distinction. In return he treated his predecessor with due consideration, confirmed his standing orders, and requested that he would keep the command of his division as formerly in the grand army. The Baron's division consisted of all the Maryland and Delaware troops: these with a small legionary corps under col. Armand, consisting of about 60 horse and as many foot soldiers, who arrived a few days before, and three companies of artillery, constituted the whole of the army. The Baron with great satisfaction complied with Gates's request. A considerable body of North Carolina militia had taken the field under gen. Caswell. His appointment and instructions to join and co-operate with the regular forces had been announced to the Baron, who daily expected his arrival, and with him a considerable supply of provisions. Caswell, however, upon the plea of preventing some disaffected inhabitants from taking arms in favor of the enemy, excused his not complying with the instructions; and as to the supply, though promised, no part of it ever arrived. On the morning of July the 27th, gen. Gates marched at the head of the army to effect a junction of the regular and irregular forces, to assume an appearance of hostile views upon the enemy's advanced posts, under expectation of sharing with the militia the supply they received from the state. The troops passed Deep river at the Buffalo-ford, and encamped in the afternoon at Spinks' farm on the road to Camden. (Vol. III., 391)

"On the 28th of July (the day after the American army encamped at Spinks' farm on the road to Camden) col. Otho H. Williams repeated to gen. Gates the advice he had given in substance to baron de Kalb more than a fortnight before; which was to deviate from the direct road to Camden-to order gen. Caswell to join him at the mouth of Rocky river on Peedee and from thence to send his heavy baggage, women and invalids to Salisbury (a day's march higher up the country) and there establish an hospital and magazines-to march all his effective troops from the mouth of Rocky river to Charlotte, where a magazine, hospital,

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and if necessary an armory might be securely established-and from Charlotte to march by way of Waxhaws towards Camden. By this route the army might have proceeded without impediment through a well cultivated country, whose inhabitants were attached to the common cause. Magazines and hospitals might have been established in the rear, secure from surprise, and directly upon the old trading road from Philadelphia to Charles Town, by which the supplies from the north might have followed the army without danger. Not only so, but the army would have been followed by numerous bands of faithful friends, able and willing both to furnish supplies and to assist with arms, instead of being encompassed with a host of fugitive tories, whose poverty afforded no subsistence, and whose perfidy prevented secrecy. A council was called upon the occasion; but the opinion did not prevail: the first motives preponderated, and the army pursued the direct route for Camden. It was joined by lieut. Col. Porterfield, an officer of distinguished merit, with about 100 Virginia soldiers. He had by his singular address and good conduct, found means, not only to avoid the hapless fate of the other corps which had retreated after the surrender of Charlestown; but to subsist his men, and keep up the semblance of a possession of that part of South Carolina.

"The army soon felt the scarcity of provisions; and their fatigue, fasting and repeated disappointments as to supplies so exasperated them, that their murmurs became very audible. The aspect of mutiny was in almost every countenance; but as there was no object to be seized upon or sacrificed, the conciliating arguments of the officers, who shared the calamity without discrimination, induced the soldiers to forbear and rely upon legal expedients and a good providence for succour. The principal means of subsistence found on the march were lean cattle accidentally picked up in the woods. Meal and flour were so very scarce, that their whole army was obliged to make use of green corn and peaches, as the best substitutes for bread the country afforded. Dysenteries afflicted the troops in consequence of such diet. It was however the least of two evils. They had no other relief from famine, which added to the intense heat of the season, and unhealthiness of the climate, threatened destruction to the army. Starvation became a cant term upon the occasion. Perhaps the burlesque introduced by the ignorance of some of the policy of others to show a contempt for their sufferings, contributed not a little to the resolute stoutness that now discovered itself.

"In the afternoon of the 5th of August, the American general was informed from gen. Caswell, that he meant to surprise or attack a part of the enemy, on little Lynch's creek. This made Gates the more anxious for a junction, as he apprehended some injudicious adventure might deprive him of the assistance which the militia were capable of affording. The next morning intelligence arrived from the same authority, which increased his anxiety to a painful degree, it was, that the enemy just mentioned, meditated an attack upon the militia in their encampment. Such a show of enterprise, and such marks of intimidation-such a contrariety of intentions and apprehensions perplexed the commanding officer, and made the junction still more desirable. Gates therefore gave orders for the troops to clean their arms and to have every thing ready for action; and then proceeded with his deputy adjutant general and aids to the encampment of the militia, whom he found to be a fine body of men, deficient only in discipline and military arrangements. Whether Caswell found his vanity gratified in a separate command, or wished to precipitate the army into an action with the enemy, was not discoverable: the fact is, he postponed a junction until he saw

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the perplexity and danger in which his ambition or indiscretion had involved the army. When it was too late for measures to be changed, he complied more through necessity than inclination.

"At Deep creek (August 6th) the troops received a supply of good beef, and half a pound of Indian corn meal per man. They eat their mess; drank of the stream contentedly; and the next day with great cheerfulness marched to the cross-roads, where they were joined by the militia, and the whole were encamped together. A good understanding

appeared to subsist among the officers of all ranks, and the common soldiers vied with each other in supporting their spirits and despising their fatigues, which they appeared to forget. The expectation of this junction had induced the commanding officer of the post on Lynch's creek to retire the day before, under the mask of offensive operations, which caused the alarm above related.

"Being now in a country of pine barrens, extensive sand-hills and impenetrable swamps, unable to collect provisions and forage from the lower and more fertile parts of the country, which were covered by the enemy's advanced posts, the army could not remain more than a day in this situation, though a large reinforcement of militia from Virginia was expected every hour. Gates therefore pressed forward; and finding the enemy disposed to dispute the passage of Lynchs' creek, while he kept up an appearance of taking that route, he marched the army by the right towards Clermont (better known by the name of Rugeley's mills) where the enemy had a small garrison. His intentions being discovered, both posts were abandoned with some precipitation on the 11th, the officers fearing either that their march to Camden would be intercepted, or that they should be attacked on their retreat. Lord Rawdon, who commanded the advanced posts of the British army, assembled all his forces at Camden, and suffered gen. Gates, without any material interruption, to conduct his army to Clermont about 13 miles from Camden, where his troops encamped on the 13th. The next day brigadier gen. Stevens arrived with a respectable reinforcement of 700 Virginia militia. An express also arrived the same day from col. Sumpter, who reported to Gates, that a number of the South Carolina militia had joined him on the west side of the Wateree; and that an escort of clothing, ammunition and other stores for the garrison at Camden, was on the way from Charles Town, and must pass the Wateree at a ferry about a mile from Camden, under cover of a small redoubt occupied by the enemy, on the opposite bank of the river.

"A detachment of the Maryland line, consisting of 100 regular infantry and a company of artillery, with two brass field pieces, and 300 North Carolina militia, were immediately forwarded under the command of lieut. Col. Woolford to join col. Sumpter, who had orders to reduce the redoubt and intercept the convoy. Gen. Gates was preparing at the same time to advance still nearer to Camden, and if necessary, to take a position on some good grounds in its vicinity; but he was not without hope that Lord Rawdon would evacuate that post as he had the others; and if he should not, the prospect was, that the multitudes of militia expected from the upper counties would cut off his supplies from all quarters, and leave the garrison an easy prey to the army. After making some convenient arrangements, having the arms cleaned, and distributing some provisions, which had been collected, Gates convened his general officers, of which grade there were not less than thirteen in that little army, the militia brigades of North Carolina having far more than sufficient; and after a conference with them, he directed the deputy adjutant general, col. Williams, to issue the following orders, with the intention as well to take advantage of the time when col. Sumpter was to execute his enterprise, as to be prepared for action himself, in case it should be offered.

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[[These orders](#), dated Camp Clermont, 15th of August 1780, and issued as "after General Orders," will be found in their place in the General Orders issued by General Gates, printed in the Original Documents in the Magazine]

"When the deputy adjutant general received these orders, he showed Gates an abstract of the field returns of the different corps, which he had just been digesting into a general return. From thence it appeared that the whole American Army, officers included, amounted only to 3,663 (exclusive of the troops detached to col. Sumpter), beside col. Porterfield's and major Armstrong's light infantry, amounting to 250, and col. Armand's legion to 120, altogether 370, and a few volunteer cavalry. There were about 900 continental infantry, rank and file, and 70 cavalry. This force was inferior to what the general imagined; his plan, however, was adopted, and he thought it too late to retreat. The army marched about ten at night, and had proceeded to within half a mile of Sander's creek, about half way to Camden, when a firing commenced in front.

"Lord Cornwallis, unknown to gen. Gates, arrived the day before at Camden. His inferior force, consisting of about 1700 infantry and 300 cavalry, would have justified a retreat; but considering that no probable events of an action could be more injurious to the royal interest than that measure, he resolved upon taking the first good opportunity of attacking the Americans; and learning that the situation of their encampment at Clermont was disadvantageous, he marched about the same time the Americans did, with a full determination to attack them in their camp at

daybreak. About half an hour past two in the morning the advanced parties of both armies met in the woods, and a firing commenced. Some of the cavalry of Armand's legion being wounded by the first fire, threw the others into disorder, and the whole recoiled so suddenly, that the first Maryland regiment, in front of the column, was broken, and the whole line of the army thrown into a general consternation. This first impression struck deep. The light infantry, however, executed their orders, and particularly those under Porterfield behaved with such spirit, that the enemy was no less surprised at this unexpected meeting. A few prisoners were taken on both sides, by whose information the respective commanders derived a knowledge of the circumstances, of which both, till then, were ignorant. Porterfield, in whose abilities and activity Gates had justly placed great dependence, received a musket ball, which shattered the bones of his leg, and was under the necessity of submitting to be carried to the rear. A part of the light infantry still kept their ground, and being supported by the vanguard of the legion infantry, which discovered much bravery, the American army soon recovered its order. Cornwallis also kept his ground; and frequent skirmishes ensued during the night, with scarce any other effect than to discover the situation of the armies, to evince the intentions of the generals, and to serve as a prelude to what was to occur in the morning.

"Immediately after the alarm, the American army was formed in the following manner — the Second Maryland brigade, under gen. Gist, on the right of the line, flanked by a morass; the North Carolina division, under gen. Caswell, in the centre; — and the Virginia brigade, under gen. Stevens, on the left, flanked by the North Carolina militia, light infantry and a morass; thus both flanks were well covered. The artillery was posted on the most advantageous ground near the main road, which was about the centre of the line. Col. Armand's corps was ordered to the left, to support the left flank, and oppose the enemy's cavalry. Baron de Kalb commanded on the right of the line; and gen. Smallwood the

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first Maryland brigade, which was posted as a corps-de-reserve two or three hundred yards in the rear. Gates then called his general officers together, and desired col. Williams to communicate the information which he had collected from the captives, which being done, the general said, 'Gentlemen, you know the situation, what are your opinions?' Gen. Stevens answered, 'It is now too late to retreat.' Silence ensuing, and no reply being made, the general, after a pause, pronounced, 'Then we must fight; gentlemen, please to take your posts.' No more was said in council; but it was afterward declared to be the private opinion of some then present, that it was injudicious to risk a general battle, and that a retreat was by no means impracticable. It was not to the credit of any officer to make such declaration. Whoever is called to a council of war, and declines giving his own opinion, if he has any, acts below the courage of a soldier, and should thenceforward screen either his cowardice or treachery by keeping the matter a profound secret.

"The British army was thus disposed-the division on the right consisted of a small corps of light infantry, the 23d and 33d regiments, under lieut. Col. Webster; — the division on the left was formed of the volunteers of Ireland, the infantry of the legion, and part of lieut. Col. Hamilton's North Carolina regiment, under Lord Rawdon, with 2 six and 2 three pounders, commanded by lieut. McLeod; — the 71st regiment with a six pounder, composed the reserve, one battalion in the rear of the right division, the other of the left; — and the cavalry of the legion stationed in the rear, close to the 71st regiment. This disposition was made at break of day; but before it took place the British appeared in column about 200 yards in front of the American artillery, while gen. Gates was with his corps-de-reserve. Col. Williams ordered the artillery to be fired upon them, which was instantly obeyed; and then went to inform Gates of the occasion of the firing, and the enemy's having the appearance of spreading and forming a line by their right, 'which,' said the colonel, 'gives us a favorable opportunity of commencing the attack of infantry with Stevens' brigade.' The General answered, 'Very proper, let it be done.' Orders were immediately given to Stevens, who advanced with his brigade in excellent order with great alacrity. The enemy had however, formed their line before he got near enough for action. Both lines were advancing, and had come within firing distance of each other, when Stevens, encouraging his men, put them in mind of their bayonets, which they had received only the day before, calling out to them, 'My brave fellows, you have bayonets as well as they, we'll charge them.' Col. Williams had advanced in front of the brigade, from which he had taken a few volunteers, intending, by a partial fire, to extort that of the enemy at some distance, in expectation that the militia would stand the first discharge, and be brought to closer action with their loaded muskets. But the advantage was lost. Lord Cornwallis observing the movement of the Virginians under Stevens, gave orders to lieut. Col. Webster to begin an attack. The British infantry upon that rushed through the thin fire of the militia with great intrepidity, and furiously

charged the brigade with a cheer. The intimidated militia threw down most of their arms, bayonets and all, and with the utmost precipitation and trepidation fled from the field, and were followed by the North Carolina militia light infantry. The whole North Carolina division being panic struck, imitated the shameful example; except one regiment, commanded by col. Dixon, next in the line of battle to the continental regulars, which fired several rounds; indeed gen. Gregory's brigade, to which that regiment belonged, paused longer than the others; but at last all fled, and the majority without their arms, or firing a single shot. It cannot appear excessively strange that such raw militia could not stand before bayonets, when it

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is considered that for some time they had subsisted on fruit scarcely ripe, without any regular rations of flesh, flour, or spirituous liquors; — that their strength and spirits were depressed by such preceding low regimen; — and that, after an unexpected meeting of the enemy, they had to lie for hours on their arms, attended with the apprehension of immediate danger and the horrors of the night.

"All the militia who composed the left wing and centre being routed, the second continental brigade, consisting of Maryland and Delaware troops, making the right wing, and the corps-de-reserve, were left to fight or retreat; but as they had no orders for the latter, they maintained their position with great resolution, and gave the British an unexpected check. The second brigade even gained ground and took no less than 50 prisoners. But the corps-de-reserve being considerably outflanked, were thrown into disorder; they were soon rallied by their officers, and renewed the action with much spirit. Overpowered by numbers they were again broken; but the brave example and exertions of the officers induced them to form afresh. The gallantry of this corps covered, in a great measure, the left of the second brigade, which was in a manner blended with the enemy's line on their left, where the conflict was desperate. The Americans, thinking themselves master of the field, disputed with the British who should conquer and retain the other as prisoners of war. At length the enemy directing their whole force against these two devoted corps, the fire of musketry became yet more tremendous, and was continued with equal perseverance and obstinacy, till Lord Cornwallis observing that there were no cavalry opposed to him, pushed forward his dragoons, and charging with his bayonets at the same moment, put an end to the contest. Never did men behave better than the continentals in the whole of the action; but all attempts to rally the militia were ineffectual. Lieut. Col. Tarleton's legion charged them as they broke, and pursued them as they were fleeing. Without having it in their power to defend themselves they fell in great numbers under the legionary sabres.

"General Gates was borne off the field by a torrent of dismayed militia. They constituted so great a part of his army, that when he saw them break and flee with such precipitation, he lost every hope of victory; and his only care was, if possible, to rally a sufficient number to cover the retreat of the regular troops; he retired with gen. Caswell to Clermont, in hope of halting them at their late encampment. But the further they fled, the more they dispersed, and the generals giving up all as lost retired with a very few attendants to Charlotte. On their retreat, an officer from col. Sumpter overtook them, and reported to Gates, that the colonel had succeeded fully in his enterprise the evening before against the enemy's post on the Wateree; had reduced the redoubt and captured the guard; and had intercepted the escort with the stores, which were all taken, with about 40 waggons and upwards of 100 prisoners. Gates however could take no advantage of this success; the enemy was at his heels, and his victorious friends on the opposite side of a river too distant to form a junction in time to prevent his fate.

"Most of the Virginia militia returned to Hillsborough by the route they came to camp; and gen. Stevens found means to stop a considerable number at that place; but the term for which they had taken the field being nearly expired, all who had not deserted were soon afterward discharged. The North Carolinians fled different ways, as their hopes led or their fears drove them; and many were intercepted by their disaffected countrymen, who but a few days before had generally submitted to Gates, by whom they were generously sent to their homes, upon a promise of remaining neuter or of following his colours. Several considerable

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parties had actually taken arms with a professed design of joining the Americans; but so soon as they heard of their defeat, they became active in the pursuit of the fugitives, and killed and captured all that came in their way.

"Baron de Kalb, while exerting himself with great bravery to prevent the defeat of the day, received eleven

wounds. His aid-de-camp, lieut. Col. Du Buysson, embraced him, announced his rank and nation to the surrounding foe, and begged that they would spare his life. While he generously exposed himself to save his friend, he received sundry dangerous wounds, and was taken prisoner. The baron expired in a short time, though he received the most particular assistance from the British. He spent his last breath in dictating a letter, expressive of the warmest affection for the officers and men of his division-of the greatest satisfaction in the testimony given by the British army of the bravery of his troops-of his being charmed with the firm opposition they made to superior force, when abandoned by the rest of the army-of the infinite pleasure he received from the gallant behaviour of the Delaware regiment, and the companies of artillery attached to the brigades-and of the endearing sense he entertained of the merit of the whole division he commanded. The Congress resolved on the 14th of October, that a monument should be erected to his memory in Annapolis, the metropolis of Maryland, with a very honorable inscription. Gen. Rutherford surrendered to a part of the British legion. All the other general officers escaped; but were separated from their respective commands, and obliged to flee with precipitation. Every corps was broken, and dispersed through the woods. The bogs and brush, which in a degree screened them from the fury of their foes, laid them under the necessity of separating from each other. Major Anderson, of the 3d Maryland regiment, was the only infantry officer, whose efforts to rally the men, after the total routs, were in any degree effectual. A few individuals of several companies joined him at some distance from the field and others added to that small number by falling into his ranks on the march. The removal of the heavy baggage to Waxhaws was delayed till the morning of the action contrary to Gate's express orders the day preceding; so that the greatest part, together with all that followed the army, fell into the hands of the enemy, or was plundered in the route by those who went off early, and could take time for such baseness. A general transfer of property took place; even that which escaped the foe fell not again into the hands of the right owners, except some small part of the officers' baggage, which was recovered at Charlotte. The baggage wagons indeed of gen. Gates and baron de Kalb, being furnished with stout horses and clever drivers, who understood their business and knew the roads, were fully preserved. All the baron's baggage and papers were saved; as were Gates's, and every paper and private letter of all the gentlemen belonging to his family. The pursuit was rapid for more than twenty miles; and so great was the dismay of the retreating troops (the cries of the murdered in the rear, being echoed by the women and wounded men with increasing terror) that at the distance of forty miles whole teams of horses were cut out of the wagons to accelerate the flight. Many wounded officers and soldiers were got off by like expedients; some of whom gave astonishing proofs of what pain, fatigue, and want, the human constitution can bear. The road by which the troops fled was covered with arms, baggage, the sick, the wounded, and the dead. Gates was persuaded by all that he saw and heard, that the regular troops were entirely cut off, and the whole either killed or captured; and that there was no prospect of collecting a force at Charlotte (where he arrive late in the night) adequate to the defence of the country; he therefore left Gen. Caswell at Charlotte to assemble the militia of Mecklenburg country, and proceeded with all possible dispatch to Hillsborough , to

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devise some plan of defence in conjunction with the legislative body of North Carolina. He considered not, that by shortening his journey, and remaining at Charlotte or Salisbury, appearances would be less unfavorable to his personal reputation, though less beneficial to the public cause.

"Lord Cornwallis's victory was complete. The Americans lost eight field pieces, the whole of their artillery, with all their ammunition wagons, besides 150 others, a considerable quantity of military stores, and the greatest part of their baggage. The numbers slain cannot be precisely ascertained, no returns of the militia ever being made after the action. Three hundred of the North Carolina militia, besides 63 wounded, were made prisoners. Only three of the Virginia militia were left wounded on the field of battle: owing to their making no stand, and being first in flight, but few of them were captivated. From the abstract of muster and inspection, taken at Hillsborough October the 1st, it appears that exclusive of baron de Kalb and gen. Rutherford, the numbers of killed, captured and missing, in the action of the 16th and 18th, were 4 lieutenant colonels, 3 majors, 14 captains, 4 captain lieutenants, 16 lieutenants, 3 ensigns, 4 staff, 78 subalterns, and 604 rank and file. The impossibility of accounting with certainty for those who fell in battle, and those who fell into the hands of the enemy obliged the officers to make many missing, who were probably killed or prisoners. Through Cornwallis's victory was complete, yet from the accounts which the British gave of the action, it may be inferred it was dearly bought. Gates apprehended early in September, that he had established it as a certain fact, that more than 500 of their old troops were killed or wounded.

"On the 17th and 18th of August, brigadiers Smallwood and Gist, with several other officers, arrived at Charlotte (full 80 miles from the place of action) where upwards of a hundred regular infantry, col. Armand's cavalry, and a major Davie's small partisan corps of horse from the Waxhaw settlement had collected. Smallwood had been separated from the first Maryland brigade, after the men had been engaged a while, by the interposal of the enemy; and finding it impracticable to rejoin them, as well as apprehending they must be overpowered and could not retreat, rode off for personal safety. The little provisions which the troops met with at Charlotte, proved a most seasonable refreshment. The drooping spirits of the officers began to revive; and hopes were entertained, that a respectable force might soon be again assembled from the country militia, and from the addition of col. Sumpter's victorious detachment. All these prospects however were soon obscured by the intelligence on the 19th of the complete dispersion of that corps." (Vol. III, 429)

As Gordon's was the earliest, so Bancroft's [\[6\]](#) is the latest authoritative account of this disastrous campaign. In the tenth volume of his great work he narrates in his rapid, vivid style, the incidents of the advance and the retreat, and finally dismisses the fallen hero of Saratoga with the contemptuous character of "a petty intriguer, but no soldier." That the reader may justly weigh the accuracy of the old and the new judgments, Mr. Bancroft's account is given in full. And here it is proper to say that the venerable author, in his recent "thoroughly revised edition," [\[7\]](#) has adhered without the alteration even of a word, to the text of his original statement.

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"The news that Charleston had capitulated found Kalb still in Virginia. In the regular European service he had proved himself an efficient officer; but his mind was neither rapid nor creative, and was unsuited to the exigencies of a campaign in America. On the twentieth of June he entered North Carolina, and halted at Hillsborough to repose his wayworn soldiers. He found no magazines, nor did the governor of the state much heed his requisitions or his remonstrances. Caswell, who was in command of the militia, disregarded his orders from the vanity of acting separately. Officers of European experience alone,' wrote Kalb on the seventh of July to his wife, 'do not know what it is to contend against difficulties and vexations. My present condition makes me doubly anxious to return to you.' Yet under all privations the officers and men of his command vied with each other in maintaining order and harmony. In his camp, at Buffalo Ford on Deep River, while he was still doubting how to direct his march, he received news of measures adopted by congress for the southern campaign.

"Washington wished Greene to succeed Lincoln; congress, not asking his advice, and not ignorant of his opinion, on the thirteenth of June unanimously appointed Gates to the command of the southern army, and constituted him independent of the commander-in-chief. He received his orders from congress, and was to make his reports directly to that body, which bestowed on him unusual powers and all its confidence. He might address himself directly to Virginia and the states beyond it for supplies; of himself alone appoint all staff officers; and take such measures as he should think most proper for the defence of the south.

"From his plantation in Virginia, Gates made his acknowledgment to congress without elation; to Lincoln he wrote in modest and affectionate language. His first important act was the request to congress for the appointment of Morgan as a brigadier-general in the continental service, and in this he was supported by Jefferson and Rutledge. He enjoined on the corps of White and Washington, and on all remnants of continental troops in Virginia, to repair to the southern army with all possible diligence. "Upon information received at Hillsborough from Huger, of South Carolina, Gates formed his plan to march directly to Camden, confident of its easy capture, and the consequent recovery of the country. To Kalb he wrote; 'Enough has already been lost in vain defence of Charleston; if more is sacrificed, the southern states are undone; and this may go nearly to undo the rest.'

"Arriving in the camp of Kalb, he was confirmed in his purpose by Thomas Pinckney, who was his aid, and by Marion. It was the opinion of Kalb that the enemy would not make a stand at Camden. His first words ordered the troops to be prepared to march at a moment's warning. The safest route, recommended by a memorial of the principal officers, was by way of Salisbury and Charlotte, through a most fertile, salubrious and well cultivated country, inhabited by Presbyterians, who were heartily attached to the cause of independence, and among whom a

post of defence might have been established in case of disaster. But Gates was impatient; and having detached Marion towards the interior of South Carolina, to watch the motions of the enemy and furnish intelligence, he, on the morning of the twenty-seventh of July, put what he called the 'grand army' on its march by the shortest route to Camden, through a barren country, which could offer no food but lean cattle, fruit, and unripe maize.

"On the third of August the army crossed the Peedee River, making a junction on its southern bank with Lieutenant-colonel Porterfield of Virginia, an excellent officer, who had been sent to the relief of Charleston, and had kept his small

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command on the frontier of South Carolina, having found means to subsist them, and to maintain the appearance of holding that part of the country.

"The force of which Gates could dispose was greater than that which could be brought against him, it revived the hopes of the South Carolinians, who were writhing under the insolence of any army in which every soldier was a licensed plunderer, and every officer a functionary with power to outlaw peaceful citizens at will. The British commander on the Peedee called in his detachments, abandoned his post on the Cheraw Hill, and repaired to Lord Rawdon at Camden. An escort of Carolinians, who had been forced to take up arms on the British side, rose against their officers, and made prisoners of a hundred and six British invalids who were descending the Peedee River. A large boat from Georgetown, laden with stores for the British at Cheraw, was seized by Americans. A general revolt in the public mind against British authority invited Gates onwards. To the encouragements of others, the General added his own illusions; he was confident that Cornwallis, with detached troops from his main body, was gone to Savannah, and from his camp on the Peedee he announced on the fourth, by a proclamation, that their late triumphant and insulting foes had retreated with precipitation and dismay on the approach of his numerous, well appointed and formidable army; forgiveness was promised to those who had been forced to profess allegiance, and pardon was withheld only from those apostate sons of America who should hereafter support the enemy.

"On the seventh, at the Cross Roads, the troops with Gates made a junction with the North Carolina militia under Caswell, and proceeded towards the enemy at Lynch's Creek.

"In the following night, that post was abandoned; and Lord Rawdon occupied another on the southern bank of Little Lynch's Creek, unassailable for the deep, muddy channel of the river, and within a day's march of Camden. Here he was joined by Tarleton with a small detachment of cavalry, who on their way had mercilessly ravished the country on the Black River as a punishment to its patriot inhabitants, and as a terror to the dwellers on the Wateree and Santee. By forced march up the stream, Gates could have turned Lord Rawdon's flank, and made an easy conquest of Camden. Missing his only opportunity on the eleventh, after a useless halt of two days, he defiled by the right, and marching to the north of Camden, on the thirteenth encamped at Clermont, which the British had just abandoned. The time thus allowed, Rawdon used to strengthen himself by four companies from Ninety Six, as well as by the troops from Clermont, and to throw up redoubts at Camden. "On the evening of the tenth, Cornwallis left Charleston, and arrived at Camden before the dawn of the fourteenth. At ten o'clock on the night of the fifteenth, he set his troops in motion, in the hopes of joining battle with the Americans at the break of day.

"On the fourteenth, Gates had been joined by seven hundred Virginia militia under the command of Stevens. On the same day, Sumter, appearing in camp with four hundred men, asked as many more to intercept a convoy with its stores on the road from Charleston to Camden. Gates, who believed himself at the head of seven thousand men, granted his request. Sumter left the camp, taking with him eight hundred men, and on the next morning captured the wagons and their escort.

"An exact field return proved to Gates that he had but three thousand and fifty-two rank and file present and fit for duty. 'These are enough,' said he, 'for our purpose;' and on the fifteenth he communicated to a council of officers

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an order to begin their march at ten o'clock in the evening of that day. He was listened to in silence. Many wondered at a night march of an army of which more than two-thirds were militia, that had never even been paraded together; but Gates, who had the 'most sanguine confidence of victory and the dispersion of the enemy,'

appointed no place for rendezvous, and began his march before his baggage was sufficiently in his rear.

"At half-past two on the morning of the sixteenth, about nine miles from Camden, the advance guard of Cornwallis fell in with the advance guard of the Americans. To the latter, the collision was a surprise. Their cavalry as in front, but Armand, its commander, who disliked his orders, was insubordinate; the horsemen in his command turned suddenly and fled, and neither he nor they did any service that night or the next day. The retreat of Armand's legion produced confusion in the first Maryland brigade, and spread consternation throughout the army, till the light infantry on the right, under the command of Colonel Porterfield, threw back the party that made the attack and restored order; but at a great price, for Porterfield received a wound which proved mortal.

"To a council of the American general officers, held immediately in the rear of the lines, Gates communicated the report of a prisoner, that a large regular force of British troops under Cornwallis was five or six hundred yards in their front, and submitted the question whether it would be proper to retreat. Stevens declared himself eager for battle, saying that 'the information was but a stratagem of Rawdon to escape the attack.' No other advice being offered, Gates desired them to form in line of battle.

"The position of Lord Cornwallis was most favorable. A swamp on each side secured his flanks against the superior numbers of the Americans. At daybreak his last dispositions were made. The front line, to which were attached two six-pounders and two three-pounders, was commanded on the right by Lieutenant-colonel Webster, on the left by Lord Rawdon; a battalion, with a six-pounder, was posted behind each wing as a reserve; the cavalry were in the rear, ready to charge or to pursue.

"On the American side, the second Maryland brigade, of which Gist was brigadier, and the men of Delaware occupied the right under Kalb; the North Carolina division with Caswell, the centre; and Stevens with the newly arrived Virginia militia, the left; the best troops on the side strongest by nature, the worse on the weakest. The first Maryland brigade, at the head of which Smallwood should have appeared, formed a second line, about two hundred yards in the rear of the first. The artillery was divided between the two brigades.

"Gates took his place in the rear of the second line. He gave no order till Otho Williams proposed to him to begin the attack with the brigade of Stevens, his worst troops, who had been with the army only one day. Stevens gave the word, and as they prepared to move forward Cornwallis ordered Webster, whose division contained his best troops, to assail them, while Rawdon was to engage the American right. As the British with Webster rushed on, firing and shouting huzza, Stevens reminded his militia that they had bayonets; but they had received them only the day before, and knew not how to use them; so, dropping their muskets, they escaped to the woods with such speed that not more than three of them were killed or wounded.

"Caswell and the militia of North Carolina, except the few who had Gregory for their brigadier, followed the example; so that nearly two-thirds of the army fled without firing a shot. Gates writes of them, as an eye-witness: 'The British cavalry continuing to harass their rear, they ran like a torrent and bore all

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before them,' that is to say, the General himself was borne with them. They took to the woods, and dispersed in every direction, while Gates disappeared entirely from the scene, taking no thought for the Continental troops whom he had left at their posts in the field, or flying, or, as he called it, retiring as fast as possible to Charlotte.

"The militia having been routed, Webster came round the flank of the first Maryland brigade, and attacked them in front and on their side. Though Smallwood was nowhere to be found, they were sustained by the reserve, till the brigade was outflanked by greatly superior numbers, and obliged to give ground. After being twice rallied, they finally retreated. The division which Kalb commanded continued long in action, and never did troops show greater courage than these men of Maryland and Delaware. The horse of Kalb had been killed under him, and he had been badly wounded; yet he continued the fight in front. At last, in the hope that victory was on his side, he led a charge, drove the division under Rawdon, took fifty prisoners, and would not believe that he was not about to gain at the day when Cornwallis poured against him a party of dragoons and infantry. Even then he did not yield, until disabled by many wounds.

"The victory costs the British about five hundred of their best troops; 'their great loss,' wrote Marion, 'is equal to a defeat.' How many Americans perished on the field, or surrendered, is not accurately known. They saved none of their artillery and little of their baggage. Except one hundred continental soldiers, whom Gist conducted across the swamps, through which the cavalry could not follow, every corps was dispersed. The canes and underwood that hid them from their pursuers separated them from one another.

"Kalb lingered for three days; but before he closed his eyes he bore an affectionate testimony to the exemplary conduct of the division which he had commanded, and of which two-fifths had fallen in battle. Opulent, and happy in his wife and children, he gave to the United States his life and his example. Congress voted him a monument. The British Parliament voted thanks to Cornwallis.

"Gates and Caswell, who took flight with the militia, gave up all for lost; and leaving the army without orders, rode in all haste to Clermont, which they reached ahead of all the fugitives, and then pressed on, and still on, until late in the night, the two Generals escorted each other into Charlotte. The next morning, Gates, who was a petty intriguer, not a soldier, left Caswell to rally such troops as might come in; and himself sped to Hillsborough, where the North Carolina legislature was soon to meet, riding altogether more than two hundred miles in three days and a half, and running away from his army so fast and so far that he knew nothing about its condition. Caswell, after spending one day at Charlotte, disobeyed the order of his chief and followed his example.

"On the nineteenth, American officers, coming into Charlotte, placed their hopes of a happier turn of events on Sumter, who commanded the largest American force that now remained in the Carolinas."

These narratives of Gordon and Bancroft present antagonistic views of the character and military capacity of Gates. The one represents the opinion held of him by his contemporaries, the other the subsequent verdict of our most distinguished historian. The purpose of the present paper is to note their differences, and to re-open the argument in the new light which the recently discovered papers of General Gates throw upon the subject.

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When the news of the surrender of Charleston to the British, on the 12th of May, reached Philadelphia, where Congress was sitting, the necessity of a reorganization of the Southern Department was immediately apparent, and the eyes of the country turned instinctively to General Gates. Washington, Mr. Bancroft asserts, "wished Greene to succeed Lincoln," but "Congress not asking his advice, and not ignorant of his opinion, on the 13th June, unanimously appointed Gates to the command of the Southern army, and made him independent of the Commander-in-Chief." According to Gordon, the "reasons that wrought in favor of General Gates were that he was considered in common as the best qualified for the command." That this was the general opinion of men well competent to judge, including those who had served under him in the Saratoga campaign, is amply sustained by documentary evidence. Colonel Morgan, who commanded the riflemen who turned the tide at Bemus' Heights in the battle of the 19th September, had watched the conduct of affairs with considerable alarm. Doubting the capacity of Lincoln, he had, unsolicited, written to a member of the Board of War to urge the assignment of Gates, in who he had the utmost confidence, to the southern command. Informed of his appointment, he wrote to him on the 24th June, that he was "exceedingly glad that he had the command to the southward," among other reasons, because "his character would stir up the people and put fresh life into them," and then hastened to give his advice to Jefferson, the Governor of Virginia, concerning the employment of the militia of that State.

John Rutledge, the Governor of South Carolina, who had witnessed the British successes in his neighborhood, had already written dispatches to the South Carolina delegates in Congress to urge the assignment of Gates to the southern department, and driven from his home by their further advance,

hurried to Philadelphia to secure the "appointment of an able and experienced General for that purpose." Finding that his wishes coincided with the sentiment of Congress, he immediately wrote to Gates expressing his satisfaction, and tendering him every assistance in his power. Governor Nash of North Carolina, expressed the same satisfaction in these significant words: "We think ourselves highly favored by Congress, Sir, in having a gentleman of your approved abilities and good conduct appointed to the command in chief in these Southern States," and pledged his hearty support. Richard Peters, Secretary of the Board of War, in an affectionate note, assured him of his contentment, and recalled the disastrous

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situation of the northern states from which Gates rescued them by his military skill at Saratoga. "Our affairs to the southward look blue-so they did when you took command before the Burgoyne I can only now say, go and do likewise-God bless you."

Nor was the Chevalier de la Luzerne, the representative of the generous monarch whose fleet was hourly expected with timely succor, less marked in his words of pleasure with the appointment. "The choice (he wrote on the 6th July) which the thirteen States have made of you in the present condition of affairs, to labor to reestablish matters in the Southern States, gives me every ground for favorable augury of the success of the enterprises you may undertake. The union of your interests with our own is so intimate that we congratulate ourselves as much as the United States at seeing such important operations in your hands." These seem to be sufficient evidence of the correctness of Gordon's statement that "Gates was considered in common as the best qualified for the command." It also appears that it was in difference to this common opinion that Congress made the appointment, and not in consequence of any importunity on the part of General Gates or his immediate personal friends, as has been hinted, if not directly charged, while the interference of Rutledge shows with equal conclusiveness that Gates was not alone the choice of the New England members of Congress in a supposed jealousy of Washington's paramount influence, but that he was the choice, also, of those most immediately concerned in the conduct of affairs in the southern department.

Peters' opinion of the "blue" aspect of affairs has been quoted. Nor were the Armstrongs, father and son, better satisfied with the outlook. "Whilst I congratulate you," wrote John Armstrong on the 15th June, "on your present unanimous appointment to the command of the Southern department, I cannot be insensible of the prospect before you & the many known & unknown difficulties you have to encounter. Let wisdom, patience and fortitude from above carry you through." And the son, John Armstrong, Jr., a few days later, in his characteristic eccentric vein, says, "As it stands I don't know whether the appointment be a matter of condolence or congratulation," and adds, "be it eventually, my dear General, what it will, I intend to share your fortunes and shall be with you in a few days." To the modesty of the department of Gates, Mr. Bancroft himself bears witness. "He made his acknowledgment to Congress without elation." Gates' own words express more than this sentence implies. "While I live I shall be happy to execute the commands of Congress, and

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notwithstanding they have given me a new field for action, and that in the most untoward circumstances, I promise them I will do my utmost to save and most effectually to serve the general interest in the Southern States."

The resolution of Congress, conferring the appointment, was accompanied by a letter from the war

office (June 15, 1780) which enclosed a letter from Baron de Kalb, on whom the command of the southern department had devolved after the surrender of Lincoln, showing his situation and pointed out to Gates the necessity of his "immediate presence to organize and collect the too much divided little force which he would have for the beginning of his army," and furnished him an estimate of the forces, amounting to 3,200 total in rank and file.

The difficulties which General Gates encountered, concisely stated by Gordon, are passed by in silence by Bancroft. The letters now first published fully bear out the words of Gordon: "He soon felt for himself, finding that he succeeded to the command of an army without strength, of a military chest without money, of a department apparently deficient in public spirit, and in a climate that increased despondency instated of animating the soldier's arm. He had before him the most unpromising prospect his eyes ever beheld." These words of Gordon are without change from the letter Gates himself wrote from Fredericksburg, July 4, to General Lincoln, his predecessor, condoling with him on his defeat, and soliciting his advice in the management of the people he was about to command.

Those which he wrote from Hillsborough, on his arrival on the 19th July, to the President of Congress and Governors Jefferson and Nash, give a strong picture of the 'deplorable state in which he found every arm of the service. An entire deficiency of magazines; a hospital without medicines or stores of any kind; arms partly out of repair; too many without cartridge boxes, and all destitute of bayonet belts; without tents; frequent intervals of twenty-four hours in which the army, without distinction, were obliged to feed upon such green vegetables as they could find, having neither animal food or corn; the treasury of Virginia without a single dollar, and that of North Carolina, on which he had also warrants from Congress, in a like deficiency.' Yet the brave hearted old man still clung to the hope that with the united and animated endeavors of Virginia and North Carolina, all might be saved. With tireless energy he finally supplied all immediate deficiencies. In the evening of the 24th July he arrived at the Camp of de Kalb, at Cox's Mills, and in the morning following summoned a meeting of general officers for Thursday, the 27th, to consult on a plan of campaign,

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inviting the presence of Major General Caswell, who commanded the North Carolina Militia, and of Generals Rutherford and Harrington. To Caswell he expressed his satisfaction in the belief that the active "measures taken by the governments of Virginia and North Carolina" would enable him "to push the enemy from their advanced posts." Bancroft says that from information received while at Hillsborough from General Huger, "Gates formed his plan to march directly to Camden, confident of its easy capture and the consequent recovery of the country." The authority for this statement is not given, and the letter of Gates to Governor Nash, which went with General Huger to the Governor, announces no such intention, but contains only the general expression "that with proper exertions he had no doubt that the enemy might be confined to Charles Town, and finally expelled from it."

It was not until he reached de Kalb's camp that he arrived at any plan. He was warmly received by de Kalb, who was made "happy by his arrival," being in strait for provisions and in trouble with his cavalry officers. Here he found information, from Colonel Sumpter, concerning the British force, which was by that enterprising officer estimated at 3,240 men, scattered over twelve posts, including Charleston and Savannah. At Camden and its vicinity Sumpter considered there were not over 700 men, and in the Cheraws 600 were reported.

In his letter, which was of the 17th July, from his camp on the Catawba River, and addressed to de

Kalb, Sumpter strongly urged immediate efforts to prevent a junction of these different bodies, "which if attempted could not possibly be effected in less than twelve to fifteen days time." He pointed out "how vastly weak the enemy was by being so detached in small parties." "If," he added, "they are permitted to retreat slowly to Charles Town, or have an opportunity of collecting the forces and embodying the militia, whom they compel to do duty;" "If, I say," (he repeats his opinion,) "they are suffered to do this, they will by that means add above ten thousand men to their army, and thereby become so strong as not only to keep possession of Charles Town, but also a great part of the State besides." The plan suggested by Sumpter to prevent this junction need not be considered here, these extracts from his letters being merely introduced to show the nature of the arguments for a rapid advance, which were pressed upon General Gates by those best acquainted with the nature of the country, the force of the enemy, and the disposition of the population.

In a note to his first edition, Bancroft says, on the authority of a letter

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of de Kalb published by the British," It was the opinion of Kalb that the enemy would not make a stand at Camden," and incorporates the statement in his revised work. In a second note, quoting from Kapp's Life of Kalb, Bancroft further says that Gates was confident that Cornwallis with detached troops from his main body had gone to Savannah. And Gates was right in the supposition that he had gone southward, as Bancroft admits in the statement that on the evening of the tenth of August Cornwallis left Charleston for Camden. "To these encouragements," Bancroft says, "Gates added his own illusions."

The conference of general officers, invited by Gates on the 25th July, did not take place. General Caswell replying from his camp at Moore's Ferry, on the west side of the Yadkin, at ten o'clock the next morning, that Generals Rutherford and Harrington were at Mask's Ferry, forth-five miles below on the east side of the Peedee, adding that he was himself in a bad state of health, and asking to be excused. His letter closed with the information that the militia under his command were passing the Yadkin, and that he proposed to move down to Colston's, thirty miles below, in the fork of the Peedee and Rocky Rivers.

The next day Gates received word from General Stevens, by a letter written from his camp at Col. Thacherstone's the night of the 26th, that he expected to be a Cox's Mill with the Virginia militia, early on the morning of the 28th (July). Aware that the conduct of Caswell was a continuance of the independent action he had maintained against de Kalb's repeated request that he should join the main body, Gates justly considered it to be an intentional evasion of his orders, and alarmed at the consequences which might ensue, determined to effect a junction. In the after orders of the same day (the 26th) the troops were ordered to strike their tents the next morning at half-past three, and the officers were directed to keep their platoons, posts and stations with the nicest exactness, as the advance was towards the enemy. On the morning of the 27th (July) the army moved, General Gates at its head crossed the Deep River at Buffalo Ford, and went into camp in the afternoon at Spinks' farm. Here it was, according to Gordon, that Colonel Otho H. Williams, later his Adjutant-General, repeated to General Gates the advice he had in substance given to Baron de Kalb more than a fortnight before, which was to deviate from the direct road to Camden; to order General Caswell to join him at the mouth of Rocky River on Peedee, thence to Charlotte, and from Charlotte to march by way of Waxhaws toward Camden. Colonel Williams' narrative confirms

this statement, in these words, that "presuming on the friendship of the General, he ventured to expostulate with him upon the seeming precipitate and inconsiderate step he was taking." Bancroft states that the safest route, by way of Salisbury and Charlotte, "was recommended by a memorial of the principal officers," but gives no authority in support of the statement. Colonel Williams asserts that a short note from the most active and intelligent officers was presented to General Gates, concisely intimating the same opinion (he had expressed). General Gates said "that he would confer with the general officers when the troops halted at noon." Whether any conference took place or not, Colonel Williams adds, he did not know. If there were any formal council, the minutes of it should certainly appear among the Gates manuscripts, and the same may be said of the protest of the officers, if such there were-but the extremely full files in the New York Historical Society, from which it is evident that nothing has been designedly excluded, contain no such document. Gordon, who must have questioned Gates on this important point, says, "that a council was called upon the occasion; but the opinion did not prevail; the first motives preponderated, and the army pursued the direct route for Camden." What the first motives were must be looked for in the words used by Gordon in a preceding chapter (III., 392), viz., to effect a junction of the regular and irregular forces, to assume an appearance of hostile views upon the enemy's advance posts. From Gordon's statement, it is probable that de Kalb, and perhaps others, were verbally consulted, and that the importance of striking Camden, before the British garrisons could be concentrated there, outweighed all considerations of comfort or convenience to the army, in the alternative route suggested, or concern as to the character of the population which dwelled upon it.

Camden seems to have been considered as the strategic key to the country by the officers of both armies. Gates and Cornwallis were equally eager to reach it in force, and in the campaign which succeeded Greene and Cornwallis again struggled for its mastery. Moreover, Gates was in possession of information that, alarmed by the approach of the North Carolina militia, which had made their rendezvous at Anson Court House on the 25th of July, Major McArthur had abandoned his post on the Cheraw Hill, and marched straight for Camden, where Lord Rawdon was in command; the inhabitants rising in his rear. It is a nice question for military strategists to determine whether, with the information before him, Gates was or was not justified

in choosing the shorter but more difficult route, in order to strike Camden before it could be adequately reinforced from the more southerly posts. The sequel showed that had he been a day earlier the post might have been carried.

Renewing the march on the 27th Gates reached Colston's on the 28th July and, with increased watchfulness as the army neared the South Carolina borders, moved on the 29th to Kimborough, where he halted till the 1st August, being detained over the 31st by a violent storm. From the camp at Kimborough Gates sent an express to General Caswell on the 29th July, advising him of his movement and intentions, and invited the expression of his views as well as those of General Rutherford upon the circumstances and state of the enemy, all of whose outposts, quite to Camden, he had learned from a British deserter, had been evacuated the Sunday night previous, July 23. He also particularly asked of General Caswell "all intelligence of Lord Cornwallis' designs," and his opinions "what in the circumstances it was best to do." In this deference to Caswell's superior knowledge of country, Gates showed no signs of that reckless indifference to the opinion of others which Colonel

Williams apparently imputes to him in the direction of his march.

In reply a letter was received from General Rutherford dated Camp near the Cheraws, July 30th, to the effect that a party sent out to reconnoiter the road toward Camden had gone as far as within fourteen miles of Lynch's Creek, and returned with the intelligence that the British had left the Cheraws, and that the party which retreated from Anson's Court House was encamped at Big Lynch's Creek; and General Caswell the same day sent Brigadier General Harrington from Anson's Court House, an officer well acquainted with the country, to give details of information, expressing himself inclined to the opinion that the enemy would "collect his utmost strength at Camden, where he either intended making a stand or to retreat to Charles Town." This being in accordance with the views already entertained of his purposes, Gates pressed forward his army with all his energy. To General Caswell he wrote in conciliatory terms, excusing the neglect to comply with his summons. Inferring that this officer had put his troops in motion from Deep River he resolved to support him.

On the 30th Gates wrote to General Stevens, who was in his rear, to hurry forward, and directed General Caswell to march by the shortest road to Anderson's to which he was directing his own course.

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As he neared the enemy he desired a speedy junction of the whole force, and he had other reasons quite as important. As he advanced he found that Caswell and Rutherford had foraged the country on both sides of the river, while the Virginia militia behind him stopped all the provisions as they came forward, to such an extent that while the outlying bodies were in comparative comfort, the main army was at the point of starvation. Mortified, disappointed and grieved at the sufferings of his troops, the General wrote letters of bitter remonstrance to Governors Jefferson and Nash, at Richmond and Newbern, on whose promises he had relied.

Waiting for the artillery and baggage to come up, and delayed by the storm, the army was not put in motion until the afternoon of Tuesday, the 1st August, when the Maryland brigade crossed the Peedee at Mask's Ferry, and encamped on the east side of the river. Colonel Senf, the engineer, was ordered to trace out a redoubt on the west bank of the river to cover the ferry, and a guard of militia was left to execute the work. The crossing of the river on the 1st being again interfered with by a heavy storm, the artillery was not all gotten over till the next night. On the 3d the march was resumed, with renewed caution to the troops to preserve a perfect discipline, "as though every hour to apprehend a surprise." May's Hill was reached on the 4th, Deep Creek on the 5th.

It required still another summons to persuade General Caswell to put himself on the march. Finally on the 30th he took the required direction and his advanced arrived the next day at the appointed spot. He halted himself, however, with his main body, at Jennings' Branch, where he received information by a "person from the British camp" that there were only about 700 British at Lynch's Creek, a post fifteen miles distant, whom he thought it possible to surprise, and intimated his desire to try the venture. This word he sent by letter to Gates through Colonel Williams, who was instantly returned with consent to the attempt and orders to Colonel Porterfield, who was in the advance in camp at Thompson's Creek, to join in the enterprise, engaging also to cooperate in the movement with the main army, "not doubting that the intelligence could be relied upon." A few hours later a second messenger reached Gates from Caswell, announcing that he had received further information that the enemy, 2,900 strong, were about to march and attack him, and urging instant reinforcement.

General Gates, surprised at this conflicting intelligence, lost confidence in the judgment of Caswell, and alarmed for the safety

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the militia, hurried his troops forward. Riding in advance of his army, which halted on the road on the 6th, the General pushed on with Colonel Williams, whom he had that day appointed Deputy Adjutant-General, to Caswell's camp, which he found in confusion and disorder. The next day, the 7th, the main body came up after a forced march of forty miles in two days, and the long desired junction was made at the Deep River Creek Cross Roads.

Bancroft passes by without comment the peculiar conduct of General Caswell. His protracted neglect of the orders given him with his command of the militia to "join and cooperate with the regular forces" is noticed with implied censure by Gordon and Williams. The latter adds, that Gates told him that "Caswell's evasion of orders was caused by the gratification of his vanity at having a separate command, and that he had reason to believe, from the letters of Governor Nash, that the supplies of provisions destined for his army had been used in profusion in Caswell's camp." Surely, never was commander more shabbily treated than Gates in this unfortunate campaign. Yet with an energy unusual in a man of his age, Gates pressed on to reach his objective point, where he counted upon immediate security and abundant supplies from the fertile country. Finding Caswell's troops well armed and accoutred and eager for action, also satisfied that the force of the enemy had not increased from the middle of June, when it was estimated at not exceeding 2,000 at and near Camden, of which 1,000 regulars, 550 loyalists, and 300 cavalry and infantry of the Legion, he dispatched a courier to Colonel Sumpter with news of his movements and a request for the latest intelligence concerning the enemy, and continued his forward march. The army was re-arranged. Major-General the Baron de Kalb at the head of the Maryland troops commanded the right wing, and Major-General Caswell the left wing, North Carolina militia. Before leaving Camp Anderson Gates had placed General Harrington in command of the militia forces raising on the Peedee from the Cheraw district to the mouth of the river, and directed him to make an effort with a picked band to surprise the British Garrison at Georgetown, an enterprise which, if successful, would threaten the security of the British advance posts.

Colonel Armand's legion with Colonel Porterfield's infantry and the light infantry of General Caswell's division, were now thrown forward, with orders to hang upon and harass the rear of the retreating enemy. General orders of the same day (7th) directed that the sick and the superfluous baggage be sent to Charlotte.

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At three o'clock the next morning, the 8th, the army marched, and reached the post on Lynch's Creek which Lord Rawdon had evacuated the night before. Here a deserter brought in intelligence that the enemy halted the same morning on an eminence four miles beyond on Little Lynch's Creek, a day's march from Camden, and a much stronger position by nature than that they had left. Here the army encamped in regular order. The retreat of the British left Gates master of the field, but as Colonel Williams observes, "it was a barren one." "To have descended among the fertile fields of Black River would have been," to quote Williams again, "leaving the garrison of Camden between the army and the expected reinforcements from Virginia, besides the refugees from North Carolina repeated their assurances of joining in considerable numbers in a few days."

On the 9th the sick and the heavy baggage left for Charlotte under escort, Colonel Hull was thrown forward six miles on the road leading to Camden by Little Lynch's Creek, and Colonel Senf, the Chief Engineer, was directed to reconnoiter the ground and fix an encampment. Notwithstanding the anxiety of Gates to have his whole force in hand, the nature of the country did not admit of any delay. The last word from General Stevens was that on the 3d he still lay with the Virginia militia, in camp at Cox's, impatient to move, but awaiting supplies, to "cross the desert." The desire of Gates to reach Camden with the least possible delay was heightened by the news he in the course of the day received from Colonel Hull, five miles in advance of the army, that he had intelligence that "Lord Rawdon, with four regiments, was two miles beyond the bridge (at Little Lynch's Creek), and Cornwallis expected that evening." This disposes of Bancroft's assertion that Gates was not aware of Cornwallis' presence with the British army.

On the 10th the army again moved forward, and encamped on Lynch's Heights. On the 11th they advanced as far as Marshall's farm, on Little Lynch's Creek. Here it was discovered "that the enemy's post was on the south side of the water on commanding ground; that the way leading to it was over a causeway on the north side to a wooden bridge, which stood on very steep banks; and that the creek lay in a deep muddy channel, bounded on the north by an extensive swamp, and passable nowhere within several miles, but in the face of the enemy's work. The enemy was not disposed to abandon these advantages without feeling the pulse of the approaching army; and General Gates observed that to attack him in front "would be to take the bull by the horns." It was necessary

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for once to depart from the shortest route to the enemy's principal outpost-Camden."

Finding the enemy inclined to dispute the passage of the stream, Gordon says that an "appearance of taking that route was kept up." The army, which had been moving by the left, was on the morning of the 12th marched by the right towards Clermont or Rugeley's Mills. Armand's legion leading the way, followed by the Maryland division of regulars, while the North Carolina division of militia brought up the rear, with Porterfield's light infantry on their left flank. The change of march was covered and concealed by Colonel Hull with a detachment from the Maryland division.

This movement Bancroft condemns. "By a forced march up the stream" he says, "Gates could have turned Lord Rawdon's flank, and made an easy conquest of Camden. Missing his only opportunity, on the 11th, after a useless halt of two days, he defiled by the right, and marching to the north of Camden, on the 13th encamped at Clermont, which the British had just abandoned. The time thus allowed Rawdon used to strengthen himself by four companies from Ninety-six, as well as by the troops from Clermont, and to throw up redoubts at Camden." On a matter of tactics of this nature military critics must be allowed to decide. Johnson, in his incidental account of this campaign in his *Life of Green*, charges upon Gates as a military error that, opposed by a very inferior force to his own on the banks of Lynch's Creek, he should have suffered himself to be forced to ascent its left bank, and to pass its head, instead of forcing his way across to Camden. But from what Williams says of the nature of the ground, the passage could not have been forced without severe loss.

In addition to these motives for diverging from the direct route, was the receipt of information from Colonel Sumpter (Camp Waxsaw, 9th August) that on the evening of the Sunday previous (the 7th) he had fallen upon the British camp at Hanging Rock, and defeated them with severe loss. In his letter

Sumpter says: "Both British and Tories are panic struck, and seem well convinced that fifteen hundred men can go through any part of the State with ease," and he adds, "this will not be the case ten or fifteen days hence;" and urged strongly on Gates to send a force take possession of the high hills and Neilson's ferry, a central post, which commands all the passages, both by land and water, to Charlestown. Twelve to fifteen hundred men he considered enough for this purpose. On the 11th this enterprising officer sent further advice, that he had taken possession of all the passways over the Wateree

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River, five miles below Camden, and that all the British guards had been ordered into Camden. He reported the number of British regular troops as not exceeding twelve hundred, and the militia as less than one thousand, generally sickly and dispirited, and that a reinforcement of five hundred was expected from Charlestown to arrive in two days. Elias Langham, a sergeant of artillery from the British camp, reported that on the 11th August the effective force at Camden was 2,365 men, of which 1,770 were regulars. He also testified on his examination that Cornwallis was near with a reinforcement of Hessians, said to be at the Congaree.

On the 12th Colonel Sumpter wrote word from his camp, at Sands' Ford on the Catawba River, that no detachment had been made from the British post of Ninety-six, and that Camden was defenceless, unless the troops had retreated into it, which he did not believe, but that works were construction at the Saw Mills. He expressed himself as "clear that they meant to make no great opposition at Camden, but that all their preparations were mere amusements, by which they expected to gain time to remove their sick and wounded." He also reported three large boats, laden with salt, rum, sugars and clothing, had just come up on the way to Charlestown, and urged Gates to send a party to fall in their rear and cut off these supplies. And he again reported that the enemy were gaining strength to the westward, and that the advance of the American arms "depended much on dispatch," and a push into the heart of the country "settles the business in three weeks time, as well in Charles Town as in the Country, the enemy being so detached that they can't oppose an army," and he closes his letter with the significant sentence: "The next of your favors I am honoured with I hope will be from Santee or Camden."

In the morning of the 13th Colonel Porterfield sent in word that he had been "through the late encampment of the enemy, which they had left, and were now all in Camden." Surely in the face of this cumulative testimony, it cannot be charged upon Gates that he did not take every precaution to provide against surprise, and to obtain information, or that he was unaware of the numbers and movements of the enemy, or the presence of Cornwallis. The evidence now produced from his papers is conclusive on all these points.

On the 13th General Stevens arrived in camp with the long-expected reinforcements of Virginia militia, and Gates felt himself strong enough to detach one hundred of the Maryland line, three hundred militia and a company of artillery with two brass pieces to join Colonel Sumpter

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in his proposed attempt to cut off the convoys on the Wateree, about a mile from Camden. Gordon says they were sent "to join Colonel Sumpter." The same words are used by Williams, but Bancroft says that "Sumpter appearing in camp with four hundred men, asked for as many more to intercept a convoy with its stores, on the road from Charleston to Camden." Gordon and Williams also agree in saying that the stores were on their way to Camden, but Sumpter's letter is distinct. "If (he says) these

large convoys of provisions, which are now intended for Charles Town, were cut off, that place could by no means hold out by a few days if besieged."

It is singular there should be a doubt on a point like this. If, as Bancroft states, Sumpter came into camp with four hundred men and took as many more away, Gates diminished his force by a detachment equal to a fourth of his whole army. If the provisions were going to Camden the temptation was great both to deprive the enemy and to supply himself; if to Charleston, the venture had but the latter stimulant. Where statements are so radically different, all authorities should be produced that the point be settled.

Commenting on this diversion Bancroft says, "Gates, who believed himself at the head of seven thousand men, granted his (Sumpter's) request." This is a repetition of Williams' statement, that Gates "showed him a rough estimate of the forces under his command, making them upward of seven thousand; whereupon he showed him by the field return that the numbers of rank and file fit for duty was exactly three thousand and fifty-two." Gordon says that when the Deputy Adjutant-General showed Gates an abstract of the field returns, from which it appeared that there were 4,033 men, "this force was inferior to what the General imagined." No doubt the General was disappointed, but it is too much to ask of ordinary credulity to believe that a man like Gates, who had been bred to arms, had himself been the Adjutant-General of the American army, in which capacity he did admirable service, and whose correspondence shows him to have been the most methodical of men, could have so grossly misconceived the extent of his force. It must be remembered also that the Maryland line, the light infantry, the cavalry and artillery were fixed quantities-1,340 men. He must have known the strength of the reinforcements General Stevens brought in on the 13th-700 men. These, together, amounted to about 2,000 men. The chance of false estimate is therefore confined to the numbers of Caswell's North Carolina division; and it is not very likely that Gates would have estimated this body, whose separate

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camp he had visited, at five thousand men if it did not consist of more than two thousand, according to Gordon, or one thousand if we accept Colonel Williams' statement as to the active numerical force.

The final catastrophe is now approached. Strong or weak there was nothing left to the army but to advance, and as has been seen there was no reason for discouragement. Moreover the reinforcing militia had brought with them no supplies to aid the starving army; behind was a sterile desert, whose scant yield had already been stripped to the last blade; in front the fertile plains and rich valleys of South Carolina; between this land of promise and the advancing army lay the enemy they had come to meet and were anxious to engage; and the contest did not seem unequal.

On the 15th, according to Gordon, "Gates convened his general officers, of which there were not less than thirteen, and after a conference with them directed his Adjutant General, Col. Williams, to issue his marching orders, the army to move at ten o'clock in the night." Colonel Williams says there was "no dissenting voice in the council." Bancroft, that Gates "was listened to in silence." The orders were, according to Williams, no sooner promulgated than they became the subject of animadversion. Nowhere, however, is there any information that the dissatisfaction of the officers was with the order of march. The objection is said to have been to the night march with troops two-thirds militia. The marching orders, however, prescribed "the profoundest silence." Besides, as Williams justly observes in this connection, neither officers nor men "knew or believed any more than the General that any

considerable body of the enemy were to be met with out of Camden." The purpose of Gates was to "take a position on some good grounds" (to use Gordon's words,) in the vicinity of Camden, and to be in supporting distance of Sumpter.

The army marched at the hour appointed, and before daylight fell in with the British advance. The troops were formed in line of battle, and a council of officers immediately summoned. The information obtained from prisoners captured by the advance guard was communicated, that Cornwallis in person was in front of them, and their opinions asked. Stevens exclaimed, "It is now too late to retreat," and it is difficult to see how a retreat could have been successfully made. The authorities essentially agree in the account of the battle. The Virginians were led to the attack, but the British troops moving down upon them with impetuosity, threw the whole body into such a panic that, according to Williams, "they threw down their loaded arms and fled in the utmost



PART OF MAP ENGRAVED FOR JOHNSON'S LIFE OF GREENE.

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consternation. The unworthy example of the Virginians was almost instantly followed by the North Carolinians. * * * The torrent of *unarmed* militia bore away with it Generals Gates, Caswell, and a number of others. General Gates at first conceived a hope that he might rally at Clermont a sufficient number of the militia to cover the retreat of the regulars; but the further they fled the wider they dispersed, and the generals soon found themselves abandoned, by all but their aids." The next morning Gates left Caswell to rally such troops as might come in, and assemble the militia of Mecklenburg County, and himself hastened to Hillsborough, to concert some plan of defence with the Legislature of the State, "considering not (says Gordon) that by shortening his journey and remaining at Charlotte or

Salisbury, appearances would be less unfavorable to his personal reputation, though less beneficial to the public cause." Gordon says: "Gates was borne off the field by a torrent of dismayed militia. They constituted so great a part of his army that when he saw them break and flee with such precipitation, he lost every hope of victory, and his only care was, if possible, to rally a sufficient number to cover the retreat of the regular troops." Bancroft ignores the statements of Williams and Gordon, and charges that "Gates and Caswell took to flight with the militia, leaving his army without orders." Fortunately there is other evidence than that of Williams and Gordon.

Among the Steuben papers in the New York Historical Society collections there is an account of Gates' movements from the 13th of August, when he arrived at Rugeley's House, Clermont, till his arrival at Hillsborough on the 19th. This valuable document is endorsed "Plan of Camden by Colonel Senff." Colonel Christian Senff was the Chief Engineer of the southern army. He had been detached with the troops sent to Colonel Sumpter, and it was he that brought word to Gates after the fate of the day at Camden was decided, of Sumpter's complete success. Gates sent him with dispatches to Congress, announcing his own defeat. The plan which accompanies the account is supposed to be his drawing. Both are given in the appendix. He describes the manner in which Gates endeavored in "person to bring the militia into order and fire," and, "closed in upon by the enemy's horse, was forced with Colonel Armand and his escort to wheel." And how he (Gates) personally a second time hoped to bring them into order at some distance, but again in vain; and closely pursued, barely escaped with two of his aids. Armand's horse reduced to fourteen men, being unable to follow even. Colonel Senff further states that it was "with the

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advice of his officers that Gates thought proper to get by the assistance of the night through that part of the country to Hillsborough, where there had been left some detachments of artillery, and that most chiefly the militia had directed their course that way, and it was therefore more probable to reassemble some of the scattered militia in that quarter, and draw all the detachments together, till other measures could be taken."

There is also among the Gates papers in the New York Historical Society collections an account of the battle by Major McGill, who, as may be seen by the General Orders of the 9th, had been an "extra aid-de-camp to the commander in chief." The account was given by that officer in a letter to his father, of which Gates later obtained a copy for his files. McGill describes the "chasm made between the two brigades" by the flight of the militia, and the effectual manner in which the enemy's horse, charging through the opening and turning the rear, cut off the commander in chief from any further communication with the Maryland division. The veteran heroes stood firmly, under the brave de Kalb, and redeemed the honors, "if not the fortunes of the day." He speaks also of Gates "riding to stop the militia." "Had they there not run like cowards," concludes McGill, "our army was sufficient to cope with them (the British), drawn up as we were upon a rising and advantageous ground." If further evidence be needed, it may be found in the letter of General Stevens to General Gates (also in the Gates papers at the New York Historical Society), dated August 21st, from his camp at Parsons' Farm, 18 miles from Masque's Ferry. L "I rejoice to hear of your being safe; but most sincerely condole with you for our misfortunes, and more especially as they were brought on by ye damned rascally behavior of ye militia. My feelings never knew what it was to be hurt before, tho' to repine is unmanly and answers no good end; therefore am determined, and am now ready to obey your commands with double ardor." Of the bravery of Stevens there has never been question. Williams

calls him "the gallant Stevens."

To pass from these opinions of eye-witnesses and actors in the events of the disastrous day to other contemporaneous authorities; General Greene, writing from Camp at Kennemunk, September 5, 1780, to Governor Green of Rhode Island, concurs in the same general testimony; "General Gates made several unsuccessful attempts to rally the militia, but they were so panic struck, it was all to no purpose, and the general was borne away on the road, and had the mortification to leave the Maryland Line bravely engaged, without having it in his power to assist them, or even to tell what was their fate."

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Greene visited the battle-ground in company with Colonel Williams in 1781. Williams in his narrative says that the choice of the field was approved by that "judicious and gallant" officer. Gordon (IV., 98) quotes a letter of Greene, written from the High Hills of Santee, 8 August, 1781, to a friend at Philadelphia, which confirms this statement, and contains a complete vindication of Gates' conduct in and after the action.

"Gen. Gates left this country under a heavy load; and I can assure you he did not deserve it. If he was to be blamed for anything at all, it was for fighting, not for what he did or did not do in or after the action. I have been upon the ground where he was defeated, and think it was well chosen, and the troops properly drawn up; and had he halted after the defeat at Charlotte, without doing the least thing, I am persuaded there would have been as little murmuring upon that occasion as in any instance whatever, where the public meet with misfortune of equal magnitude." By common accord Greene stands at the head of the military men developed by the long struggle, and his unsupported testimony is alone sufficient to outweigh the censorious criticism of civilians or historians of whatever grade. He commanded the very troops who had been defeated under Gates, was surrounded by their officers, acquainted with their opinions, and his practical eye had measured the route of the army and the scene of the contests.

How Washington was affected by the news appears in his letter of the 8th October to Gates. "The shock was the greater," he says, "as the operations a few days preceding the action were much in our favor. The behaviour of the Continental troops does them infinite honor." This letter is printed by Sparks in his Writings of Washington, VII., 237. What lesson he drew from the conduct of the militia may be seen in his as yet unpublished circular letter, a copy of which addressed to Governor George Clinton, from his headquarters near Passaic Falls, 18th October, 1780, is in the New York State Library.

"America has been almost amused out of her liberties. We have often heard the behaviour of the Militia extolled upon one and another occasion by men who judge only from the surface; by men who had particular views in misrepresenting-by visionary men, whose credulity easily swallows every vague story in support of a favorite Hypothesis. I solemnly declare I never was witness to a single instance that countenances an opinion of Militia or raw troops being fit for real business of fighting. I have found them useful as light parties to skirmish in the Woods, but incapable of making or sustaining a serious attack. This firmness is only acquired by habits of discipline and service. I

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mean not to detract from the merit of the Militia. Their zeal and spirit upon a variety of occasions

have entitled them to the highest applause, but is of the great importance we should learn to estimate them rightly. We may expect every thing from men that Militia is capable of, but we must not expect from [them] any services for which Regulars alone are fit. The late battle at Campden is a melancholy comment on the doctrine. The militia fled at first fire, and left the Continental troops, surrounded on every side and overpowered by numbers, to combat for safety instead of Victory. The enemy themselves have witnessed to their valor."

The misfortune which befell Gates is not alone in history. It was not unlike that which befell the great Frederick, who was swept off the field of Mollwitz by a part of his own routed army to a great distance, and returned to find the battle had been won by those who remained. To one portion of Bancroft's severe charge, that Gates was "a petty intriguer, but not soldier," this paper has been devoted, and the argument is willingly surrendered to the decision of the candid mind. The conclusion is that Gates moved forward at the earnest solicitation of Congress on the promise of abundant supplies; that once engaged upon the march, to halt or turn back would have been alike disastrous in the effect upon the population of the southern states, and that when the barren desert had been crossed, he pressed on under the double stimulus of abundance in the rich country before him, and the assurances of Sumpter and those best competent to judge that his march to Camden would not be seriously opposed. That his dispositions were not in accordance with true military laws has not yet been asserted by any competent military critic.

Ramsey, in his history of the Revolution of South Carolina, sums up the argument in a sentence. "Though much censure was cast on General Gates for this unfortunate action, yet, upon a careful examination of every circumstance, his chief fault seems to be his risking a battle. He chose the most advantageous ground, drew up his men to the best advantage, but to make them fight was beyond his power." In this the historian concurs with Greene, the best military authority.

Of the equanimity of spirit with which Gates bore his mortification, and the dignity with which he disregarded the malice of his contemporaries, his admirable correspondence is sufficient proof.

The remaining charge of Bancroft, that Gates was a "petty intriguer," is far more grave. Fortunately it is not supported to one atom of evidence. It was not the opinion of his contemporaries, in who his

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character was held in high regard. It cannot be shown from his manuscripts, where the correspondence of those of his friends who are said to have been concerned with him in the cabals of the day remains intact; a testimony of conscious innocence. Gates at the time himself indignantly repudiated any connection with the intrigues against Washington, and Gordon, who examined his papers in 1781, records that "there was not a single paragraph to be met with that contained any intimation of his being concerned in any such plan."

General Gates died childless. The news of the death of his only son, "an elegant young man, well educated and just entering the active scenes of life," was kept from him while in camp, after the battle of Camden, but added to the bitterness of his retirement. His fame has no defence save the use that historians may make of his abundant manuscripts, to which he seems to have left the perfect vindication of his capacity and his character. And this silent appeal is not in vain. The disaster of Waterloo will never blot out the glory of Austerlitz, nor the rout of Camden efface the memory of Saratoga.

Washington, in one of his letters to Major Tallmadge consoling him for his mishap on the expedition with which he had been entrusted, made use of an expression which may well be applied to the conduct of Gates. The experience of the great chief had been chequered. He has as often felt the humiliation of defeat as the exultation of victory. "However," wrote Washington, "it may be the practice of the world and those who see objects but partially, or through a false medium, to consider that only as meritorious which is attended with success. I have accustomed myself to judge of human actions very differently and to appreciate them by the manner in which they are conducted, more than by the event; which it is not in the power of human foresight and precedence to command." Let Gates be measured by this standard.

JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS

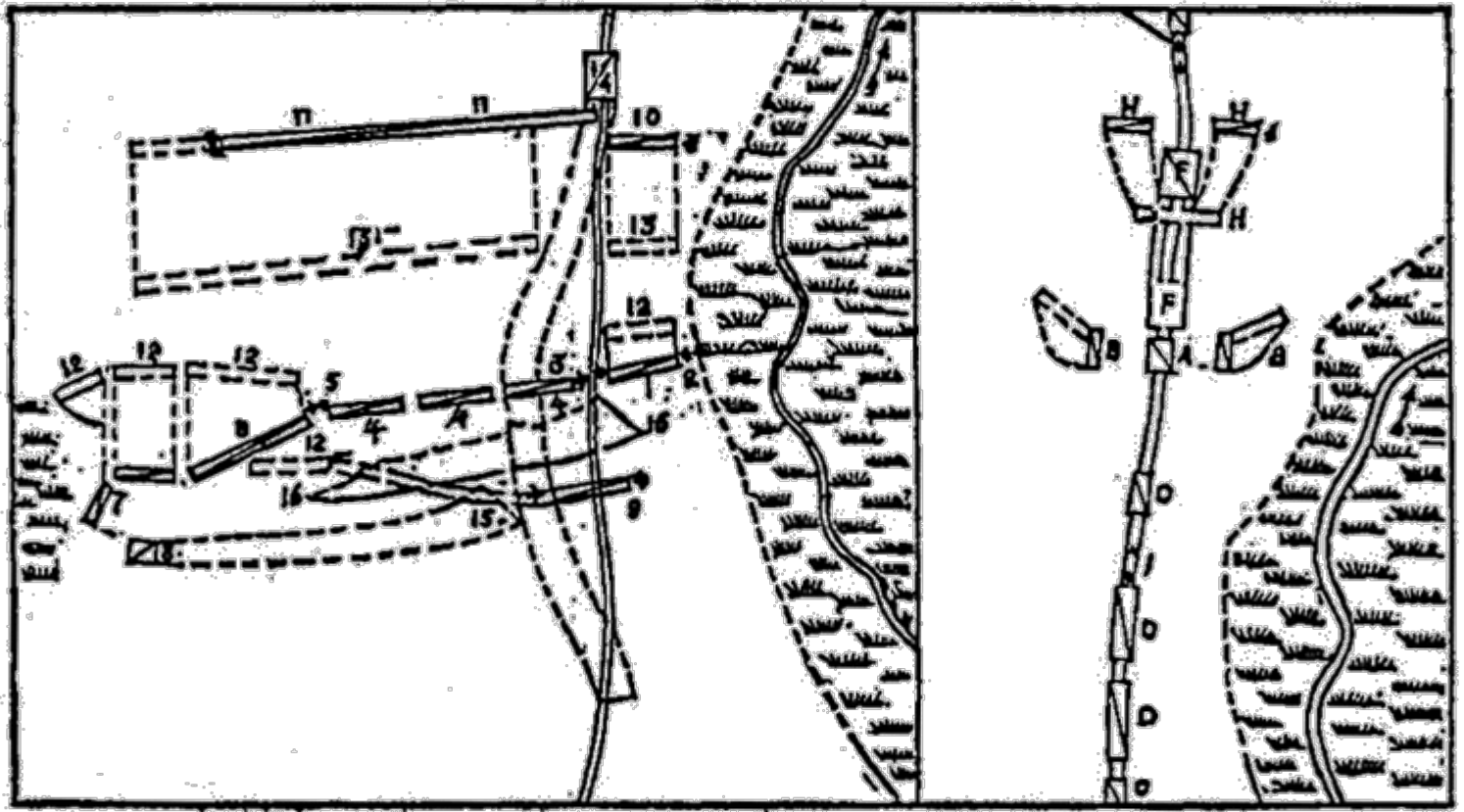
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APPENDIX

I

PLAN OF THE BATTLE NEAR CAMDEN, BY COLONEL SENFF [\[102\]](#)

From the Steuben Papers — N.Y. Historical Society



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The 13th August, 1780, General Gates arriv^d with the Southern Army at Rugely's House, 13 miles this side Camden, on the Road from Charlotteburg to Camden, where the Enemy had a Post, but retreated precipitately on the approach of Gen^l Gates. That afternoon, Night & next Morning Reconoitering partys were sent out, the Enemy at Camden and inferior to our Army. Upon intelligence of the Engineer the Gen^l detach^d in the Night of between the 14th and 15th ins^t. 400 men,

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with a field piece, Conducted by Co^l Senf, to join Brig Gen^l Sumpter of the South Carolina Militia (12 miles West from the Army), who was moving down the West Side of Wateree river, according to Gen^l Gates' order. This junction was effected the 15th in the morning by crossing the Wateree River at a kind of Ford. Gen^l Sumpter march^d down the river (on which the Enemy evacuated several out posts on the river), Surprised a Guard on the West Side of Wateree Ferry, 3 miles from Camden, consisting of about 40 men, under a Militia Co^l (Carey), took them prisoners, with which he took also 40 waggons with Drivers, 4 Horses & Waggon, loaded with Rum, Flour, Corn, &c., 300 head of Cattle & some Sheep.

A few Hours after this a Detachment of 70 men of the 71st & 33rd Regts came from Ninety Six to join the Enemy at Camden, were likewise taken Prisoners by Gen^l Sumpter, after which the Enemy made motion to cross the river below to attack him; he retreated up the River that Night for 10 miles, of which Co^l Senf return^d to report to Gen^l Gates.

The 15th Gen^l Gates, as the 700 Virg^a Militia, under B Gen^l Stevens made junction, consulted with all the General Officers on taking another Position for the Army, as the Ground where they were upon was by no means tenable. On reconnoitering a Deep Creek, 7 miles in the front, was found impassable 7 miles to the Right, & about the same distance to the left, except only at the place where the Ford intersects the great road. It was Unanimously agreed upon to march that Night the Army to that Creek, by which means they would get a more secure Encampment, come nearer Gen^l Sumpter, occupy the road on the East side of Wateree river, and would be able to get nearer

intelligence of the Enemy. As for to march back on that Road, and take an equal Strong or Stronger Position, was not certain, would have given the Enemy a weak opinion of our Strength & more encouragement to attack — The Communication with Gen^l Sumpter, which had been effected, yet rather too great a distance, would have been given up again, difficult of getting Intelligence of the Enemy, & our Horses in want of Forage. To march to the Right to fall into the road on the East side of Wateree river (if even the road would have admitted of it), but it would not without a great deal of work, & Pioneers too were wanted, the Baggage of the Army would have been exposed; the Road where Supplys came from open to the Enemy & impossible to turn those Waggons directly into another road before the Enemy's Horse might have cut them off from the Army.

Certain Intelligence came the 15th to Gen^l Gates that Lord Cornwallis had arriv^d the Evening before at Camden, & a reinforcement had arriv^d that Day, but no certainty of the Strength could be obtain^d.

The 15th, the Evening, at 10 o'clock the Army march^d from Rugeley's to take Post in Front at the mentioned Creek in the following order — Co^l Armand's Legion (a) made the Van, supported by 200 Light Infantry on each Flank under Co^l Potterfield (b). The Van Guard of the Army (c). The first (d) and second (d) Maryland Brigade, under Major Gen^l Baron de Kalbe, each Brigade two field pieces; the three Brigades of North Carolina Militia under Gen^l Caswell. The Virginia Militia under Gen^l Stevens, the Artillery (e), Stores and the Rear Guard. During the march Reconoitering Parties, sent out from the advanc^d Corps, came back, & nothing seen in the Road, soon after, (about half an Hour after two in the morning of the 16th August) Co^l. Armand's Van party got hail^d by an advanc^d party of the Enemy; an answer was made directly on our side on which the Enemy's Horse immediately charg^d furiously with a great deal of Huzzas (f). Co^l. Armand stood the charge, & Co^l Potterfield's light Infantry (g) gave a crossing Fire upon the Enemy's Horse, which made them retreat immediately, upon which

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the Enemy's Light Infantry advanced (h), and after a fire of about five minutes drove our Advanc^d Corps back upon our Advanc^d Guard and Main Body, and then likewise retreated; This affair caused a little Confusion in the Line, but was soon redress^d. The Army drew up in order of Battle, & having taken a Prisoner of the Enemy, who confirm^d that Lord Cornwallis Commanded the Army himself, consisting of above 3000 men, and that he was come out with an Intention to attack General Gates in his Camp at Rugeley's upon which Gen^l Gates call^d all the General Officers together to hear their opinion on that occasion, & it was their Unanimous Opinion that it was now too late to retreat, a Battle ought to be fought, & some of them were glad to have an opportunity of such, as they had no idea of the Enemy's Superiority or of the following behaviour of the Militia.

General Gates form^d order of Battle, viz —

The Second Maryland Brigade (1) about 400 men under Brig Gen Gist on the right of the road leading to Camden, two field pieces on his right (2) & an almost unpassable Swamp & Gregs Quarter Creek on the right of field pieces, on the left of the Brigade in the main road two Field Pieces (3), the three Brigades of North Carolina Militia (4) of 1200 Men under the Brigadiers Rutherford, Graigery & Butler, two Field Pieces (5) the Virginia Militia (6) of 700 men under Brigadier Gen^l Stevens, the Light Infantry (7) then about 300 men under Co^l Potterfield, and Co^l Armand with the Horse about 60 (8) in the rear of the Light Infantry to support the left. The first Maryland Brigade (9) about 400 men under Brig Gen^l Smallwood in the rear of the Line across the road, as a Corps of Reserve.

Half an Hour before sun rise, the Enemy came in sight, drove in our advanc^d Posts, and as soon as they came in proper distance, our artillery began to play upon them. Their first Troops suppos^d Light Infantry, display^d, form^d and advanced on their left on the road with a field piece (10). Their Main Body (11) display^d to their right, when in the time they displayed our Field pieces made a good fire upon their column. Before the Enemy had fully display^d their Line, Gen^l Gates gave orders to Gen^l Stevens of the Virginia Militia & Light Infantry to advance in good order & make the attack, gave likewise immediate orders to Gen^l Smallwood to advance with the Corps of reserve,

to support the Left Wing and occupy the Ground of Gen^l Stevens. Gen^l Gates rode up to Gen^l Gist, gave orders to advance slowly with the Brigade, to reserve their fire till proper distance, fire & charge Bayonets which has been according to orders Executed. They came close, Gen^l Gist's Brigade took a Field Piece from the Enemy and kept it some time. Our Army's position was by that time such as (12), and the Enemy's (13). The North Carolina & Virginia Militia all broke & dispers^d in the utmost confusion, no sooner the Enemy's Horse discovered the confusion than they chrg^d (14), they wheeled to the right & Left, took the 1st & 2^d M. Brigade in their Flanks & rear (16), when in the mean time the Enemy advanced in their Front, to which of course our brave Troops have fallen a Sacrifice. [\[106\]](#) General Gates, who was in the rear of the 2^d Maryland Brigade, after having given the mentioned order look^d back to the road, saw the Militia run and the Enemy's Horse charge, rode to the militia & Endeavored himself with the assistance of General Caswell and Aids to bring the Militia into order and fire, but all in vain, the Enemy's Horse then came so close upon the General & Co^l Armand oblig^d to wheel. The General then hop^d to bring them to order at some Distance, but neither this would do, the militia was struck with such a Panick & obeyed no more command. The Baggage, which had been ordered off to Retreat in the night, on the road to the Waxaws, was so retarded by obstruction of the Night, bad roads & tired Horses, as to fall

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likewise a Prey to the Enemy. The Enemy's Horse pursued as fast as possible Gen^l Gates & Co^l Armand, who had about 14 men, as the remainder of his Legion, Co^l Armand's Horse much fatigued. Gen^l Gates could not be escorted by him, to get free from the Enemy, he therefore made his Escape with two of his Aids de Camp & the Engineer. He arriv^d that Night at Charlotte but no view was left to assemble any Forces there, & if it was possible, there was no Ammunition, no Arms, no Provisions, and in the middle of a disaffected Country. The Gen^l therefore thought proper, with the advice of his officers, to get by the assistance of the Night through that part of the country to Hillsborough, where there had been left some Detachments & Artillery, & that most chiefly the militia had directed their course that way, it was therefore more probable to reassemble some of the scattered Militia in that Quarter and Draw all the Detachments together 'till other Measures could be taken. General Gates arriv^d at Hillsborough the 19th August. — *Extract of a Journal concerning the Action of the 16th August, 1780, between Major General Gates and General Lord Cornwallis.*

II

THE BATTLE OF CAMDEN DESCRIBED BY MAJOR MCGILL [\[103\]](#)

From the Gates Papers — N. Y. Historical Society.

FIELD OF BATTLE WITHIN EIGHT MILES OF CAMDEN [August 1780]

In the Evening of the 15th Ins^t, a Council of Gen^l officers were unanimously of opinion that our Army should move within five miles of Camden, to an advantageous post with a swamp in our front, fordable only at the Road, and no other within seven miles on each side — At ten o'clock the Army moved in the following order —

Col^o Armand's Corps, about seventy Horse in front, Col^o Porterfield with 50 men belonging to our Reg^t, and 150 Militia upon Armand's right flank, about two Hundred yards off the road — Maj^{ro} Carolina militia upon Armand's left Flank, in the same order — Col^o Armand's orders were, should the Enemy's Horse attack him, to stand their charge, and Porterfield with the other Light Infantry to flank them — Gen' Smallwood's Brigade in front, Gen^l Gist's followed, the N^o Carolina Division under Gen^l Caswell next, and in the rear the Virginia Brigade commanded by Gen^l Stevens — After marching in this order nigh five miles, about half after two in the morning the British Horse made a most violent onset Huzzaing all the time, but were bravely repulsed by Porterfield with considerable loss — The Enemy's Light infantry next came up, the Virginia militia or the Greatest part that were with Porterfield took to their heels, and left the men belonging to our Reg^t to stand the Attack of the whole light troops; which to their Honour they did for about five minutes, in which a warm and incessant fire was kept up — Col^o Porterfield then ordered a retreat, and in turning his horse about had his leg shattered by a musket ball, which struck him upon the shin Bone — After some time the firing ceased, our line was formed, and Half and Hour before sun rise the Enemy advanced — Our Army Drawn up in the same order as in their march, only that Gist's Brigade was on our Right, Smallwood's being formed in the Rear as a Corps Du reserve. Immediately on the Enemy's driving in our Party Front, Gen^l Stevens was ordered to advance & Attack their right, and

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Gist with his Brigade to attack their left, the orders were immediately complied with, but upon the first fire the whole line of militia broke and ran; the firing upon our right had begun; I was there with Gen^l Gates, who perceiving the militia run, rode about twenty yards in the rear of the line, to rally them, which he found impossible to do there; about half a mile further, Gen' Gates and Caswell made another fruitless attempt, and a third was made at a still greater distance with no better success — Gen^l Smallwood, on

Stevens advancing to attack advanced to support him, and on the militia giving way, occupy^d the ground were the Right of Stevens, and the left of the N^o Carolina militia were drawn up; this made a chasm between the two Brigades, through which the Enemy's Horse came and charged our rear; the men to their Immortal Honour made a brave defence, but were at last obliged to give ground, and are almost all killed or taken; Gist's Brigade behaved like heroes, so did Smallwood's, but they being more to our left afforded us no opportunity of saving them; upon Gen^l Gates Riding to stop the militia, Gist's Brigade charged Bayonets and at first made the Enemy give way, but they were reinforced — We owe all misfortune to the militia; had they not run like dastardly cowards, our Army was sufficient to cope with them, drawn up as we were upon a rising and advantageous ground — *Extract of Major McGill's letter to his father, copied at my desire by George Hite.*

III

GENERAL GREENE'S ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF CAMDEN

From the Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Vol. VI., 265

CAMP AT KENNEMARK, Sept. 5th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

We have just received the disagreeable intelligence of General Gates' defeat to the southward, with all the troops under his command. This action happened on the 16th of last month within a few miles of Camden, at which place the enemy lay, and to which place our troops were directing their march.

The two armies met in the night, and a little skirmishing ensued; but the action was not serious until the morning. At daylight General Gates made the necessary disposition of his troops, consisting of between eight hundred and

a thousand regulars, and about two thousand militia and some few horse. The enemy had from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred regular troops, and about one thousand militia.

Our militia gave way the first fire, and left the Continental troops to bear the brunt of the whole of the enemy's force, which they did with great spirit and bravery. General Gist, who commanded one of the Maryland brigades, repulsed the enemy with charged bayonets; but the militia quitting their ground let the enemy into his rear.

General Gates made several unsuccessful attempts to rally the militia, but they were so panic struck, it was all to no purpose, and the general was borne away on the road, and had the mortification to leave the Maryland line bravely engaged, without having it in his power to assist them, or even to tell what was their fate; but as the firing ceased after he had got eight or ten miles in the rear, he supposes they must have been cut to pieces; however, this is not certain by any means from any intelligence we have as yet received. Further particulars are hourly expected.

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Reports come on with General Gates' letter, which say that both General Smallwood and Gist are slain, and that Baron de Kalb is wounded, but there is no authority for it.

We lost eight pieces of cannon, and doubtless all our baggage and stores. The militia dispersing and taking to the woods, few or none of them fell into the enemy's hands, but probably many of them might suffer greatly for want of provisions, and perhaps some might perish.

General Gates retreated one hundred and eighty miles in three days to Hillsborough, at which place he wrote to Congress of the misfortune which had befallen him.

This is a great misfortune; and the more so as that unfortunate country was

too discouraged before to make any great exertions. However, it was beginning to recover itself, and some few days before the action we had gained several advantages, and taken several hundred prisoners.

It is high time for America to raise an army for the war, and not distress the country by short enlistments, and hazard the liberties of these States with an order of men, whose feelings, let their principles be ever so good, cannot be like those who have been long in the field.

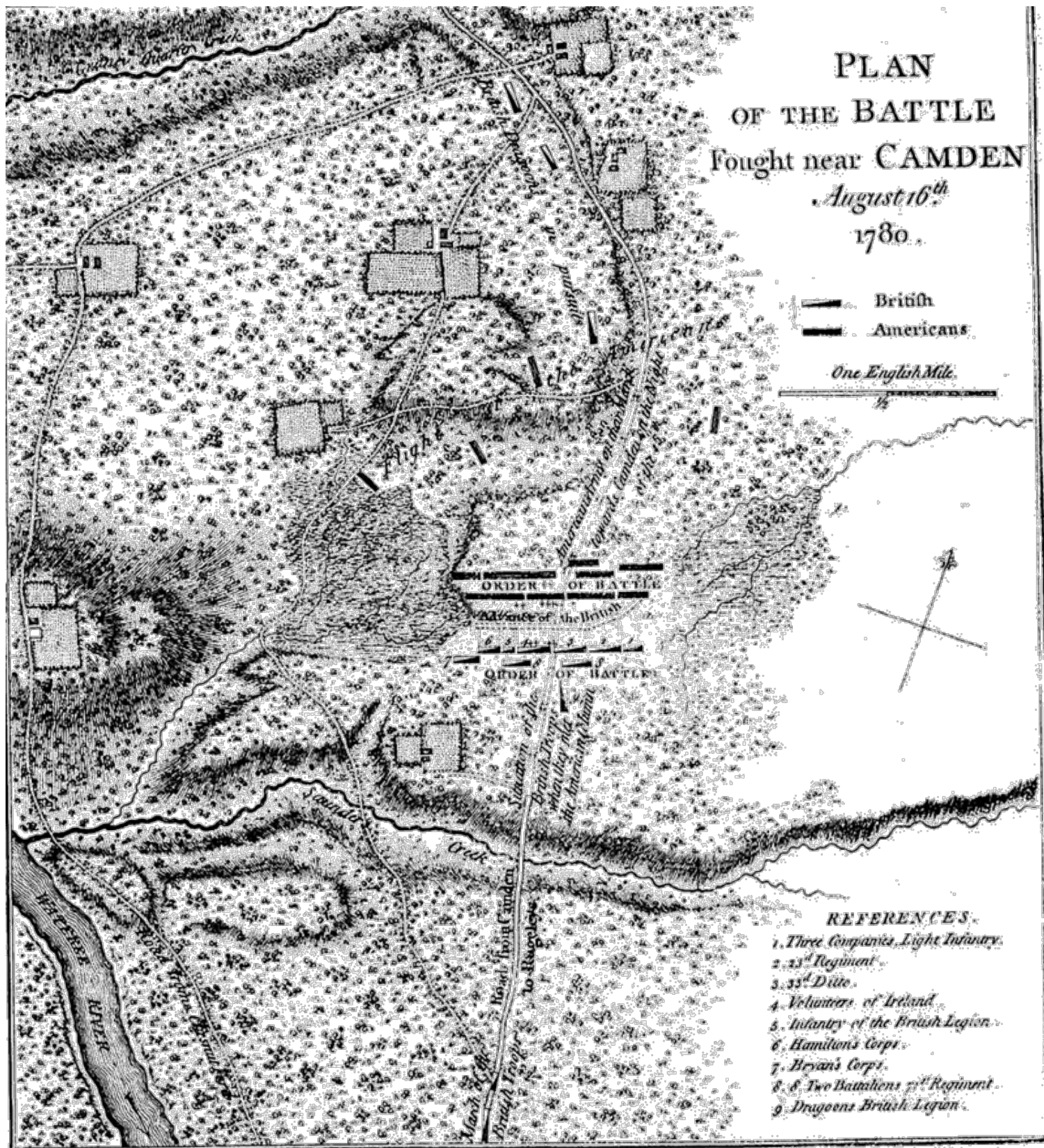
I am , with great respect,

your most obedient, humble servant,

NATH. GREENE,

N.B. I wish you not to have any part of this letter published, as the President of Congress did not think it proper to publish General Gate's letter until the arrival of further particulars.

To His Excellency Governor Greene.



Engraved for Stedman's History of the American War. Jan. 20th 1794.

THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

1780

LETTERS OF MAJOR GENERAL GATES

From 21st June to 31st August

Communicated by [Thomas Addis Emmet](#),
M. D.

NO. 1

Travelers Rest Berkely Co^y Virg^a
21st June, 1780

Sir,

Yesterday Evening I had the Honor to receive Your Excellencys' Letter dated the 13th Instant with the Resolve of Congress enclosed of the same Date. While I live I shall be happy to execute the Commands of Congress, and notwithstanding they have given me a New Field for Action and that in the most untoward Circumstances; I promise them I will do my utmost to save, and most effectually to serve the General Interest in the Southern States — The Powers given me seem as extensive as the Field is wide, and I will believe that the Generosity of Congress will be at least equal to their Confidence. I ask no sort of Indulgence for the Errors of the Heart; for those of the Head alone, I expect their compassion. I perceive in the Resolves no mention is made of the Quar Mas Gen to whom am I to look up to for the Execution of the Public Service, in that Mainspring of Military Motion. I do not wish for Patronage or the Power of displacing; I only desire that Governor & Council of State, may upon my Representation, redress all Defects, supply all Deficiencies, and regulate both that and the Commissary Generals' Department; where either of them may be found to require it. — I

shall set out on Monday Morning for Richmond, where I hope to receive the further Orders of Congress, or any Public Directions that either they or his Excellency General Washington may be pleased to communicate.

With Sentiments of Esteem &c, I have the Honor to be

H[ORATIO] G[ATES] [\[109\]](#)

To His Ex^y Sam^l Huntington
President of Congress

NO. 2

Fredericksburgh 3d July 1780

Sir,

In a Letter I have just received from the President of Congress is the following Paragraph — "I have rec^d certain Information that M^r. Clay, D^y Paym^r Gen^l in the So Dep^t was not made prisoner in Charles Town, and that he has Warr^{ts} on Virg^a and N^o Carolina, to a large am^t, which is supposed in whole, or in part, yet remaining unpaid — You will doubtless obtain certain information in these Matters (which are unknown to Congress) and perhaps find it practicable and expedient to retain M^r. Clay in the office of Paymaster General" — I request in Consequence of the above Information that you will immediately repair to me at Richmond in Virginia with all the Warrants and public Monies in your Possession — where you will receive my further Orders for your Official Conduct in the ensuing Campaign.

I am &c,

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To M^r. Clay

Fredericksburgh 4th July 1780

Sir,

The 29th Ultimo I had the Honor to receive Your Excellency's Pacquet dated the 16th June. — I have in Consequence wrote Governor Nash of North Carolina and inclosed him the Resolves of Congress as you directed, and a Letter with orders to Dep paym^r Gen^l Clay to repair immediately to my Head Quarters with all the Warrants and Monies in his Possession where, he is also informed, he will receive his further Orders. I communicated the Resolve of Congress respecting Gen^l Weedon and Colonel Morgan, to those Gentlemen — they cheerfully acquiesced in obeying the Commands of Congress; but Colonel Morgan requests me to represent to Your Excellency, that the State of Virginia have appointed some Junior Officers to himself Brigadiers General who will take Command of Him, should he take the Field in his present Rank. — This is not only a galling Circumstance to so old and deserving an Officer, but must impede and possibly entirely defeat my intention, in placing Colonel Morgan at the Head of a Select Corps from whose Services I expect the most brilliant Success. Therefore I humbly entreat your Excellency, will move Congress to order a Commission to issue immediately, appointing Colonel Morgan a Brigadier General. — I am confident the Rank, the Services and the Experience of Col^o Morgan is such as will prevent any officer, from thinking Himself aggrieved by His Promotion — I shall impatiently expect the arrival of this Commission as I wish the Service in which I design to employ Colonel Morgan may meet with the least possible Delay. — I shall set out from hence early Tomorrow Morning, and hope to get to Richmond on Wednesday; where the Governor and Legislature are now sitting: — from thence I shall again address Your

Excellency — I every Hour wish to receive the Answer of Congress in regard to what I wrote Your Excellency concerning the Commissary and Quarter Master's Departments.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Sam^l Huntington Esq^r
President of Congress

NO. 4

Fredericksburg 3^d July 1780

Sir,

I have the Honor to enclose certain Resolves of Congress, which I am ordered by that Hon^{ble} Body to transmit to your Excellency — I hope to be at Richmond, Wednesday Evening or Thursday Morning at furthest being necessarily detained here until have answered the Despatches of Congress I have received from the Northward, and settled some Matters with the public Officers in this Town — When I have consulted with the Governor and Council of this State at Richmond upon the proper Means of repelling the Invasion of these States, — I shall again do myself the Honor of addressing Your Excellency — In the Mean Time, I am confident, the State under Your Command will be inspired to act with the utmost vigour in the Support of the Common Cause. I shall be happy to hear from Your Excellency

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by way of safe conveyance, being with Sentiments of great Respect and Regard

Your most faithful & obed^t

h^{ble} Servant
H[ORATIO G[ATES]

To His Excellency Governor [Nash] of N^o Carolina

NO. 5

Fredericksburg 4th July 1780

Dear Gen^l Lincoln

The series of Misfortunes you have experienced, since you were doom^d to the Command of the Southern Department, has affected me exceedingly. I feel for you most sensibly. — I feel for myself who am to succeed, to what? To the command of an Army without Strength — a Military Chest without Money. A Department apparently deficient in public Spirit, and a Climate that encreases Despondency instead of animating the Soldiers Arm. I wish to save the Southern States. I wish to recover the Territories we have lost. I wish to restore you to your Command and to reinstate you to that Dignity, to which your Virtues, and your Perseverance, have so justly entitled you: — with me you have experienced that the Battle is not the strong. Poor Burgoyne in the pride of Victory was overthrown. Could the Enemy's Triumph over you, meet with the like Disgrace, I should be content to die in Peace, so might America be free and Independent; and its future Happiness under God rest solely upon Itself. You will oblige me very much by communication any Hints or Information, which you think will be useful to me in my Situation. You know I am not above Advice, especially where it comes from a good Head and a sincere Heart. Such I have always found yours to be; and as such, shall always venerate and esteem both. I mean not by this to urge you to divulge Matters the obligation of your Parole of Honor, commands you to conceal; I only ask you for the knowledge your have acquired at the *Charte du pais*. The Whigs and Tories of the Southern States, and how you would advise me to conduct, in regard to all those. The Enemy

I must judge of from what I see, and what I will by every Means endeavor to know.

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To General Lincoln

NO. 6

Richmond 9th July 1780

Sir

The Governor has acquainted me, that he every Hour expects an Answer to his Express to Congress (who had consulted His Excell^y Gen^l Washington upon the Subject) what Regulation was to take place, as well in respect to the Officers and Soldiers of the Virginia Line, who were not captured at Charles Town; as those who are accounted supernumerary. Before the 15th of this Month you will most probably receive Letters and Directions how to proceed thereupon.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brigadier Gen^l Muhlenberg

NO. 7

Hillsborough 19th July 1780

Sir

The deplorable state of the Commisary

and Quarter Master's Departments, and the entire Deficiency of Magazines, to supply the Southern Army, obliges me to request General Huger to be the Bearer of this Letter. His Zeal for the Public Service, anticipates my Wish, that he would be my Advocate with your Excellency and the Executive Power of the State, to supply our wants, by immediately establishing Magazines of Provisions and Forage, and properly organizing the Quarter Master General's Departments. Without these Things done, our Army is like a dead whale upon the Sea Shore — a monstrous Carcass without Life or Motion. To be particular in representing the exact state of the two Departments, and how much each Wants of its due Supplies, would fill a Volume. Gen^l Huger has seen and knows them all; to him I beg leave to refer your Ex^y and the Council, for more minute Information. Can I hope that our Distress will move ye to come for a short Time to Hillsborough. Your appearance may operate advantageously, upon the Spirits of the Militia as well as be immediately necessary in establishing a System of Supplies. With proper Exertions, I have no doubt that the Enemy might be confined to Charles Town, and finally expelled from it; but on the contrary should Inactivity or Neglect continue; their Baleful Influence must be fatal to the Army, and ruinous to the Southern States. Before I finish my letter I must request your Excellency will use your utmost Endeavors to supply 700 Tents for the Militia of your State. Virginia has promised instantly to forward a proper Number for her Troops. The Indispensable Necessity for this Article, is too striking, to need any Reasoning to enforce it. I have received no answer to the Letter I had the Honor to write your Excellency from Richmond. General Huger takes with him the Demand I have upon your Excellency from Congress, as well as that upon Virginia. I wish the Circumstances of your Treasury may be such as to enable you to answer both. General Huger will acquaint your Excellency with the Reason, I was not paid those Draught upon the Treasury of Virginia.

I am, &c

To Governor Nash

NO. 8

Hillsborough 19th July 1780

Sir

In passing through Richmond in Virginia I was informed of the Appointment you held in this Department — It was my Intention to have written you from thence, but at once unacquainted with your Motives for remaining at Williamsburgh, and the Necessity of your Personal Attention here, — I put it off until I arrived at this Post, where I find an Hospital under the Direction of a Regimental Surgeon — without medicines or Stores of any kind — I also learn from the Army that with it there's no Hospital Establishment whatever, and that the Sick are but illy accommodated — I have now to request that you will repair to my Head Quarters immediately — with such other Gentlemen as fall within your Arrangement, and may be absent. Should any Accident

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prevent your complying with this order, you will give me as Early Notice of it as possible. I am Sir &c,

H{ORATIO] G[ATES]

To the Director of Hospitals in the So. Department

NO. 9

Hillsborough 19th July 1780

Sir

When I had the Honor of seeing your Excellency at Richmond, I was taught to look forward to much Difficulty and a perplexed Department — yet I cannot but profess that in the Course of a long and often critical Service, It has never hitherto fallen to my Lot to witness a Scene of such multiplied and encreasing Wants as my present command exhibits — of the Militia voted by your State — only 1438 are now upon the Ground, Commissioned and Non Commissioned Officers included, & those not so completely supplied as I either wished or expected — The Arms were yesterday distributed among them; a few out of repair, — but too many without Cartridge Boxes; and all destitute of Bayonet Belts; which I need scarcely tell your Excellency is the certain Loss of the Bayonet — They are deficient also in Hatchets or light Axes; this article you will find in the List of Military Stores, and one that becomes doubly necessary from the Face of the Country in which we shall act — These Defects are however but trifling when compared to the Weightier Considerations of Arms, Ammunition and Provision. This State is unhappily but too much at a Loss for the First — The Casualties of the Campaign may render Issues necessary to the regular Troops, and such Volunteer Corps as I may find it expedient and practicable to embody — this leads me to press y^r Excellency that, not only such Arms and Ammunition as you may allot us from the State Stores, but all Supplies from the Board of War, may meet with as immediate a Passage into this State as possible — Upon the Subject of Provisions — my Reports must be still less Satisfactory — An officer just from the Baron's Head Quarters has assured me that there are often Intervals of 24 Hours — in which the Army without Distinction are obliged to feed upon such Green Vegetables as they can find, having neither Animal Food or Corn. — So frequent and total a Want must eventually break up our Camp; should not the Evil be hastily remedied. This Scarcity has unfortunately arose from several Causes, one of which can alone be corrected. The Scarcity of Crops for the Last year. The Disaffection of many of the Inhabitants; and a want of Economy and Management — The Supplies have been precariously obtain^d by Detachments from the Army — whose misapplied Violence in some Instances must affect any future purchases. — I have this Day made a Representation of our Wants in this and

other respects to Governor Nash — General Huger has taken charge of my Dispatch, and will Personally urge such Steps to be taken by the Council of this State, as in conjunction with those I cannot but hope for from your Excellency — may soon restore our Affairs, and enable me to prosecute my own Wishes and the Intentions of Congress. — I

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cannot conclude this Letter without suggesting the Necessity that the 1000 Tents, for which I had your Excellency's Assurances, may be sent on without a Moment's Delay — and that M^r. Finnie, D.Q.M. Gen^l, may be ordered to repair to my Head Quarters immediately — a System of Communication will be settled, — at the Establishment of which he should necessarily be present. I have other Reasons also for wishing him here. I must also beg the Liberty of Adding the very defective State of Maherrin Bridge; to the Representation I have already made of Pomunky and Petersburg Ferries, & hope these Objects, as they need the Redress, so they will meet with the Attention of your honorable Council.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To His Excellency Gov^r Jefferson

NO. 10

Hillsborough 20th July 1780

Sir,

The last Letter I am honored with from your Excellency is dated the 21st Ult^o with the Resolves of Congress of the 17th & 19th inclosed; those I immediately communicated to Gov^r Jefferson. I was unfortunate in finding the Treasury of Virginia without a single Dollar, near Two Millions having

been sent to Congress, some few Days before my arrival at Richmond; and it is with deep Regret I find the like Deficiency in this State — without Money, without Provisions — without Tents — and without many Articles, which I shall enumerate to the Board of War; — I have before me the most unpromising Prospect my Eyes ever beheld — but with the united and animated Endeavors of Virginia and North Carolina, I am yet in Hopes all may be saved — for indeed at present all seems in Danger. — My letters of yesterday's Date to Governor Nash and Governor Jefferson, copies of which are inclosed, will in some Degree describe the Situation of Affairs in this Department — a very dismal Picture indeed! to which the inclosed Letter from Baron de Kalb, received yesterday, not a single Ray of Comfort is added. I can but do my best to support our tottering Fabrick this Way, confident that Congress will, with what is left of the Southern States, do their utmost to strengthen and maintain the army under my command. My dispatches being closed, I shall set out immediately from here to join the army at Coxe's Mill, about Fifty miles to the Westward. From thence Congress may again expect to hear from me. I cannot yet know for Certainty where M^r. Clay Dep^y pay^m Gen^l is; but somewhere in this State he must be. The immediate re-establishment of a Military Chest in this Department is the Sole Concern; and I doubt not will be the instant care of Congress. With sentiments of the Highest Regard &

I am
H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Sam^l Huntington Esquire

President of Congress

NO. 11

Hillsborough 20th July 1780

Sir

By this Time the Issue of your application to the Governor and Council of Virginia must be determined. I hope

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favorably to your Wishes and mine. I look up to the Cavalry for many services, in a Campaign, which from our domestic Management as well as the supposed energetic operations of the Enemy, must be a Campaign of much hazard and some enterprise on our part. The Practicability however of mounting all your Dragoons, is I fear questionable; and upon an inquiry into our Forces, I am led to confirm the Order which I presented to you at Richmond, for the Direction of your Conduct — that it may not be mistaken, I think proper, to repeat my Intentions; that upon making the necessary Representation to Governor Jefferson, of your wants — you will arm the Detachment lately at Petersburg, and march the whole from thence to Hallifax; leaving an intelligent industrious officer to stimulate the State Agents in their Purchases. This officer will from Time to Time communicate their progress to you; and should they succeed in procuring any considerable Number at the End of a Month or Six Weeks, he may bring them forward to the Corps; — with such other additional supplies as may be obtained from the Government. — After mounting such Number of both Regiments at Hallifax as the state of your Horses and Accoutrements will admit, you will proceed immediately to my Head Quarters, with such also as must action on Foot (being the Residue of both Regiments) — An Officer with a small party, taken from those least fit to go on, must remain with the Horses to be left — who will occasionally Report their state to you; and answer the other important Papers of quickening the Passage of your Supplies from Virginia. — M^r. Long DQM Gen^l shall have orders to afford you any assistance in his Line, to render your March easy and Expeditious.

I am Sir &

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel White of the Light Dragoons

P.S. If from a scarcity of Army at Richmond you cannot be provided there — some steps shall be taken to furnish you at this place.

NO. 12

Hillsborough 20th July 1780

Sir:

My letter to Congress of this Date, with the Inclosures, all which will doubtless be referred to your Honourable Board, will give you a thorough Information of the State of Affairs here — and convince the Board how much their aid and authority will be wanting to support and supply the Army in this Department. When I arrived at Richmond in Virginia, I found the Outlines of a Laboratory beginning to be laid; which I hope will shortly be in some degree perfected; but the Board will not entirely depend on this, but send forward such Small Arm Stores as can be spared to Hillsborough. Five Hundred falling axes are absolutely necessary with the Army — this I have mentioned to Governor Jefferson — it may not be amiss in you to repeat it; and request his sending them properly packed to the Army — I know not how we are supplied with intrenching Tools; but those I will endeavor to get in this State. The Flints are bad, if better can be spared, send me 40,000 of such as are pick^d. The Stores you mention to have forwarded in your Letters of the 13th and 15th June, are not yet

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arrived — but cannot be far from hence, by the Time they must have been upon Road. Inclosed is a Copy of a Letter to Col^o White at Hallifax. I desire the Board of War will if possible, leave the Cavalry under His Command; without a Pretence for not returning to Camp. — I wish there appeared more Harmony between these gentlemen of the Cavalry and the Executive Council of Virginia — but indeed the Contrary is too apparent — it is nevertheless our Business, to strengthen the Files of the Southern Army as much as

possible. Gibson's Brent's and the Remains of Buford's Regiments, are at Petersburg, and when they will be equip^d and march^d to the Army, I know not; all that I can do has been done, to spur up the State of Virginia, to put them also in Motion — A small Hint from Congress may facilitate this, and many other Matters.

As I have no answer to any Letter I have wrote you, since I rec^d the Orders of Congress to take command this way, I know not what is doing to supply the medical Department. — I yesterday wrote to Doctor Rickman, who lives near Williamsburgh, and ordered him to come and reside here, when the First General Hospital must be fixed. The Board will do well to enforce this Order, or see that some otherwise properly provided with a Director to the General Hospital of the Southern Army. Colonel Finnie, as I understand, the D.Q M Gen^l of the Southern Army; has rec^d my Orders, to repair to, and reside at Richmond, and to act from thence to Hillsborough in forwarding the carriages, and Stores & from thence to the Camp. — I do not know if he will quit his Residence at Williamsburgh; if not, another should be instantly put in his Place. — One Hundred Waggon Continental Property should be immediately supplied this Army. — I am told Col^o Hunter of Fredericksburgh would willingly furnish them upon Credit if the Board requests his doing it — This cannot too soon be done. I am earnest for the arrival of the Arms, and the Three Hundred and Sixty Thousand Musquet Cartridges, you mention in your Letter of the 15th Ultimo to be sending forward.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To the President of the Board of War
Philadelphia.

Hillsborough 20th July 1780

Dear Baron

Yesterday I had the Honor to receive your obliging Letter of the 16th Instant, dated from your Camp on Deep River. I am astonished at your Distress, and Difficulties, and have ever since my arrival here upon last Tuesday, been endeavoring to alleviate them. I have sent Despatches to the Governor and Executive Council of this State — to Governor Jefferson of Virginia and to Congress. In all these you may be satisfied, I have described our Real Situation, so that no Mistake may be entertained on that Head. Enough has already been lost in a vain defence of Charles Town, if more is sacrificed, I think the Southern States are undone; and this may go nearly to undo the Rest. I think all my writing Business will be finished to-day, if so, I shall set out To-morrow for Camp and hope to

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be with you on Saturday. The Troopers you mention for my Escort here, are without Horses, and many of them sent by Captain Gun to Hallifax. I will acquaint you To-morrow, the Rout I intend to come, and request an Escort to meet me, at a certain Spot I will name,

With great Respect & Esteem

I am, &c

H{ORATIO] G[ATES]

Major Gen^l the Baron de Kalb

NO. 14

Hillsborough 21st July 1780

Sir,

The declining State of the regular Force in this Department has induced me to hasten the march of the scattered Remains of your Line. I hope much from the Industry of the Officers appointed to collect them, and can foresee but few obstacles in their immediate Preparation for coming forward. In the article of Cloathing, Hunting Shirts, Shoes, and overalls will be sufficient. There's little else wanted in this Climate, and all Woolen Cloaths I should consider as Incumbrances. To Bufords, Gibsons, and Brent's Regiments you will attach such Soldiers as may belong to the several Virginia Corps taken in Charles Town — placing the Whole, which I suppose will not exceed one full Regiment, under the eldest officers in each Rank, and order them to proceed immediately to Head Quarters of the Southern Department.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

Brigadier Gen^l Muhlenberg

NO. 15

Hillsborough 20th July 1780

Sir

I had the Honor of addressing your Excellency yesterday upon a Variety of Subjects. One has since arisen which may properly fall within your Excellency's Notice. In a Letter from the Baron de Kalb of the 16th Instant, he writes, "You may have met with a "small Detachment of Colonel Bufords Remains. I wanted to keep them in the Army, but "wanting Arms and Cloathing he insisted on marching them to Virginia, and promised "me he would join in the beginning of July; I have not heard from him since." Which has induced me to order the Remains of Buford's, Gibson's and Brent's

Regiments to join the Army under my command, as immediately as possible. No objection can arise in complying with this Order, if it be not a want of arms and Cloathing; an objection which, I hope the present State of your Public Stores will be as far from justifying, as I am persuaded it is Distant from your Excellency's Wishes to countenance. In the already small and decreasing Number of the Maryland Division, I need not point out the necessity of gaining every Accession to the regular Force.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To His Excellency Govr Jefferson

P. S. The inclosed Report from Gen^l Stevens was this Moment put into my Hand. It is so extraordinary in itself, that your Excellency will be necessarily led into an Enquiry of the State in which they (The Cartridge Boxes, &c)

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left Virginia, and to whom intrusted — as it carries exceedingly the appearance of Neglect or Fraud.

NO. 16

Hillsborough 20th July 1780

Sir

In a Letter from Baron de Kalb of the 16th Instant is the following Paragraph, "You may have met with a small Detachment of Col^o Buford's Remains. I wanted to keep them with the Army, but wanting Arms and Cloathing, he insisted on marching them to Virginia, and promised me he would join in the beginning of July. I have not heard from him since." In the Difficulty of

finding Arms and Cloathing I can find an Excuse for your Delay hitherto. Those Articles, I cannot but suppose are by this Time furnished; and in that belief, must convey my orders, that you join the Army under my Command as early as possible. But should any accident have arisen to prevent your Supplies, you will make such urgent application to the Executive Authority of the State, as the Necessity of the Case so clearly demands — and when prepared, lose not a Moment in coming forward. I can add Nothing upon the Subject of collecting your Men, in your passage hither, which your own Judgment will not suggest.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel Buford

NO. 17

Hillsborough 22^d July 1780

Dear Sir

Provisions and carriages sufficient for the Troops under your Command being prepared, you will at Day break on Monday Morning next, march from your present Encampment, by the most convenient Route for Cox's Mills, and from thence to the Grand Camp of the Southern Army. You will proceed by easy Stages, so as not to fatigue your Troops. Upon your last Halt previous to your joining the Army, you will dispatch your Quarter Master to me, to receive Directions, where the Troops under your Command are to encamp. Confident that you will preserve the utmost Order and Regularity upon your March, practicing your Militia in that strict Discipline the same as is necessary in the Face of the Enemy, I forbear to trouble you with more pernicious Consequences, than suffering with Impunity any wanton

Depredations, on the Inhabitants, our Friends and Fellow Citizens, that you will severely punish all who commit any outrages of that Sort.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To General Stevens Virginia Militia

NO. 18

Hillsborough 22^d July 1780

Sir

I sent your Excellency a large Packet yesterday by Captain Pendleton of the Caroline County Militia; he was directed to leave it with the stationed Express on Roanoke near Taylor's Ferry, who had a Written Order to set out with it immediately for the next Stage. The Letter for the Congress Board of War, &c I conclude your Excellency will forward with the like Dispatch.

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This Morning M^r. Samuel Lewis appeared here with a large drove of Cattle, going with them to Charlotteville. The Troops here being entirely in Want, I have detained sixteen of them for your Militia under Gen^l Stevens. I perceive M^r. Lewis's contract is for Three Thousand Head, and he informs me they are all designed to be sent to Virginia. I beg your Excell^y will consider how enormous a Draught this is from a State already invaded, and where the Southern Army void of a Magazine is to be supported. I exceedingly approve of M^r. Lewis's Vigilance and Activity in procuring Cattle, but cannot help requesting the produce of this Industry may be applied to the Maintenance of the Army, or at least so large a proportion of it, as to leave us without the Reach of Want. I am happy to find by your Excellency's Letter to Colonel

Monro, that the two Regiments of Cavalry with Gibson's, Brents and Buford's Regiments are in a way to be pushed forward to Camp. The same Letter also informs me that Major Lee's Infantry are also on the March to join us. I beseech y^r Excell^y to continue to leave all these Corps without a Reason for not joining the Southern Army; as soon as their Zeal for the Public Service will prompt them to do it. I am told there is a great deal of Tent Cloth in this State, I think at Willmington, Edenton, Hallifax and Cross Creek. Your Exc^y will doubtless by this Information be induced instantly to provide your Militia from thence. I despair of any Assistance from the Continental Board of War, in this Article, and request your Excell^y not to think of it. I request the favor of y^r Excell^y not to think of it. I request the favor of y^r Excell^y [\[107\]](#) to be particular in forwarding the inclosed to M^{rs}. Gates by the first safe conveyance; her letters to me will be sent addressed to your care.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To His Excellency Governor Jefferson

NO. 19

Cox's Mills 25th July 1780

Last night I arrived at this Camp in consequence of a Resolve of Congress investing me with the command of the Southern Department. I beg leave to give you the earliest Notice thereof, and to communicate my wish that a System of future Operation may be forthwith determined upon. To fulfil that Intention, I am to request a Meeting of the General Officers at this place, on Thursday Morning next, and to entreat the favor that you, Gen^l Rutherford and Gen^l Harrington will attend. I am happy to acquaint you that the Virginia Militia, with such Continental Corps of Cavalry and Infantry as Congress

have allotted to serve in the Southern Army, are in full March, and will speedily join us; and have also the satisfaction to think that the Measures taking by the Executive Council of Virginia in conjunction with that of this State, will shortly relieve our Distress and put it amply in our Power to push the Enemy from their Advanced Posts. With sentiments of Esteem and Regard,

I am, &c.

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Major Gen^l Caswell
(North Carolina Militia)

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P. S. I request the Favor of your immediate Answer by the Bearer, and that you communicate the contents of this letter to Gen^l Rutherford.

NO. 20

Head Quarters 27th July 1780

Sir

Major General Baron de Kalb has acquainted me that he has for some Days expected the Return of Fifteen Waggon, that were sent to Cross Creek about twelve Days ago. They Were loaded with Rum, Salt, and Corn; I wish to see those wagons or to know the Reason of their Delay. I cannot express the Anxiety I feel for the Want of a proper Supply of Flour — I wish you would exert yourself, and interest every Servant, and every good Whig, and Friend of the Public, to strain every Nerve to supply us. — A Letter I have this moment received from Major Gen^l Caswell informs me, that the Cry for Bread in his camp is full a loud as mine. I am confident your anxiety to serve your Country will lead you to do all that is possible to supply the Army.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brig^r Gen^l Rutherford

NO. 21

Camp Kimborough 29th July 1780

Sir

I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that I arrived Here this morning with the Maryland Line &c. General Stevens with the Virginia Militia is about a Days march in my Rear. — This morning I sent an express to Gen^l Caswell, and informed him that I should march on Monday Morning at 3 o'clock for Masque's Ferry. The Virginia Militia will follow immediately. I would fain receive yours as well as General Caswell's Opinion upon the circumstances, and State of the Enemy, by the Time I arrive at Masque's Ferry; and I desire Sir, that you will believe with him, that I shall be earnest that our joint and reciprocal Exertions, may be directed against the main body of the Enemy. Such Deserters as arrive from the Enemy's Regular Troops, I desire may be immediately sent to me.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brig^r Gen^l Rutherford

NO. 22

Camp Kimborough, Saturday 29th July 1780

Sir

Your favor of the 26th from Moor's Ferry I received the 27th in the evening at Spinks's 12 Miles West of Deep River. — The 28th I march^d to Cottons and this morning from thence here. — I now dispatch the Bearer to know where you and General Rutherford are at present encamped, and if you are at Colston's as I conceive you must be finding from your Letter to General de Kalb dated 23^d July last (which however did not receive until the 25th at 4 P.M.) that you were marched from the Cross Roads; I immediately put the Troops in motion from Deep River, resolve to support you, and Gen^l Rutherford so did not wait for nor expect your obeying my summons to come to Cox's Mill. — Yesterday a Deserter from the 71st Regiment

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arrived in my Camp at Cottons; he assures me the Enemy evacuated the Cheraws, and all their outposts, quite to Camden, on Sunday Night last. — This is also confirmed by several others. — Whether the movements you have been making toward Peedee; has occasioned the Enemy's Assembling at Camden, or Intelligence they have received from Sea, is uncertain. — Be that as it may, it is our Business to act as if the former alone was the Cause. I therefore request the Favour you will send me all the Intelligence in your power of Lord Cornwallis' Designs' and your opinion what in the Circumstance, it is best for us to do. My Horses are so jaded and the Artillery and Baggage so far behind, that it will be impossible for the Maryland Line to march before Monday morning 3 o'clock. — General Stevens and the Virginia militia arrived only yesterday at Deep River. I cannot expect he will be here before Tuesday — he was even then distressed for Flour.

This General, Gen^l de Kalb has been the means in some Degree of relieving, by a Supply he had taken Measures to procure from the Moravians. This supply is also extended to the Troops here, or I know not how we should

have been able to march forward — so clean Gen^l Rutherfords Troops and yours have swept this part of the Country. — Lord Cornwallis's collecting his Troops in One Body is perhaps a good Reason to us for doing the same, but this Depends upon the Intelligence we may get, and many Circumstances that it is not necessary to particularize in a Letter.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Major General Caswell

NO. 23

Circular

Head Quarters differ^t Dates in
July & August 1780

Sir

You will be pleased to forward to the District of the Militia Regiment which you Command (on Peedee River in the State of S^o Carolina) and when you shall arrive there, you will give the fullest assurances in my Name to the Friends of the United States of America, that a Powerful Army is marching to their protection, and that such of them as from the Necessity of protecting their persons and property have been obliged to profess a temporary acquiescence under the British Government, shall be received with Forgiveness and Security provided they have not taken an active Part against the Friends of America, and are willing to testify their Affection to the Cause of Liberty by joining heartily when called upon, in the Laudable Design of rescuing themselves and their Country, from the Miseries under which they now labour from the Oppression of the British Government; but if any

should be so lost to a Sense of Honor, and the Duty they owe their Country, as to maintain a different Conduct; they alone will be to blame for whatever Consequences may ensue. — You will likewise Sir, be pleased to call out as many of your Regiment as can possibly be spared, and march them immediately, as fully armed and accoutred as Circumstance will admit, to Head Quarters. The proportion to be called out I leave to your discretion, recommending to your consideration

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that the Time is now arrived, for the State of South Carolina to exert every Nerve; and that we have the fairest prospect that their Efforts will be crowned with Success.

If there should be any Vacancies for Commissioned Officers in the Regiment of Militia which you Command occasioned either by Death, Absence, or Refusal to Act, you are hereby authorized and empowered to fill up such Vacancies, by Brevets Given under Your Hand and Seal, which shall be valid, until proper Commissions can be issued; when your Appointments shall be confirmed.

As it will be necessary to collect a large Quantity of Provisions for the Support of the Army under my Command — You are hereby authorized and empowered to give Certificates for the full value of such Grain and other provisions as you may purchase for this Purpose; which Certificates shall be regularly discharged by my Commissary General of Purchases — and if you shall not be able to purchase a sufficient Quantity, you have my Warrants to impress as much as you may judge necessary, leaving a sufficient Quantity for the Support of each Family, and giving Certificates for what shall be impressed. With Respect to such Persons as refuse to take up Arms under pretense of being on parole — none are to be considered in such Light, but the Prisoners under the Capitulation of Charles Town, and Fort Moultrie, regular officers and such of the Militia as were taken under arms in actual Service. — All others who shall neglect or refuse to obey your Summons, are

to be considered as Defaulters, and a List of their Names regularly transmitted to me, that I may take such Measures against them as may bring them to a Sense of their Duty.

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel Giles, Hicks, }
And Others; Officers of } Circular
Militia South Carolina }

NO. 24

Camp Kimborough 30th July 1780

Dear Sir

Captain Paschke acquaints me, has been able to supply you with Flour, upon your Arrival at Coxe's; I am sorry you wanted it, as I was in Hopes that you would have been able to have brought with you from Hillsborough eight Days Allowance, besides what was necessary for the March there, but since it will no better be, I request you will march on with the most convenient Expedition. — The Desart affords Nothing, therefore the sooner we get through it the better. — By Deserters from the Enemy, Prisoners who have escaped from them, and Inhabitants who have come into my Camp to receive Pardon for their Crimes; and ask protection from the power that prevails; I am informed that the Enemy retreated precipitately from Anson Court House, and the Cheraws, last Sunday Night — in consequence thereof I shall March with all possible Haste, and Endeavor all in my Power to push Lord Cornwallis into Charles Town — Sure of your Support in every Effort to defeat the Enemy

I rest &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brigadier Gen Stevens

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NO. 25

Camp Kimborough 30th July 1780
4 P.M.

Dear Sir

I am honored by the Receipt of yours by Gen^l Harrington dated Yesterday from Anson Court House, I am happy your Sentiments so perfectly agree with mine; that a speedy Junction of our Whole Force should be directly affected; and it adds to my satisfaction, that you have ordered General Rutherford immediately to join you at Ancram's Plantation. The Congress, the S^o States, and Gen^l Washington do earnestly wish that no more Capital Misfortunes may befall us to the Southward, to prevent that, I shall march by the direct Route to Andersons and hope there to fall in with you and General Rutherford. General Stevens with the Virginia Militia shall have Orders to follow me forthwith, and I desire you will instantly send to Gen^l Butler (whose Route I am unacquainted with) to march by the shortest Road to Andersons. — General Harrington (with whom I have great Pleasure in being acquainted) is in Sentiment with me in this Determination; and will at my Request relate to you the Conversation we have had upon the Subject.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Major Gen^l Caswell

Camp Westside Mask's Ferry
2^d August 1780

Dear Sir

A prodigious heavy Gust having overtaken us yesterday in crossing the Ferry, we are detained here this Day, as it will be impossible to cross all the Artillery and Baggage before this Night.

Upon your marching from Masque's Ferry, I desire you will establish a Guard of a Major, Two Captains, Six Subs, Six Sergeants and two Hundred Rank and File, to guard the Ferry. The Major should receive your orders to keep a small Guard upon the Banks of the River on each side, and post his Main Body at some House upon the high ground on the West Side of the River. — You will also direct him to send small Parties up and down the River to collect all the Flats, Boats & Pettiaugers that are not immediately requisite at some particular Ferry upon a Main Road leading from the Eastward. — I impatiently wish to hear from you, and still more to see you and yours — I have not yet received a Line in Answer to the Letters I wrote you.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brigadier Gen^l Stevens

P. S. What News have you from the Eastward? I have none since I left Richmond, which astonishes me.

The West Side Mask's Ferry
Thursday 3^d August 1780

D^r Sir

I should have been glad to have received a Line in Answer to the Letter I wrote you by General Harrington, to have been certain that you would meet me at Anderson's' it would have relieved my Mind from many anxieties; — as it is I suffer every Distress for want of Provisions, and know not if I can

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expect any Relief where I am going; from you — General Rutherford and your Command have gleaned the Country on both Sides of the River; and the Virginia Militia stick in my Rear, and devour all that comes forward. — This is a Mode of conducting War I am a stranger to — The Whole should support and sustain the Whole, or the Parts will soon go to Decay — General Caswell's Zeal for the Public Service will induce him to consider my Situation, and be explicit in acquainting me how far in my present Distress I can depend upon him. I conclude General Rutherford has obeyed your Order, and that he is now with you. — The heavy Rains since General Harrington left me has delayed us so much that the Artillery Stores & Baggage will only be on this side the Ferry by 9 o'clock this Morning, when I shall instantly march (in the firm expectation of finding you there) to Anderson's — I also earnestly expect from you a supply of Provisions.

I am &c,

H[ORATIO G[ATES]

To Major General Caswell

Ferry 3^d August 1780

Sir

I had the honor to address y^r Excellency from Hillsborough the 19th ultimo by General Huger. The Distress this Army has suffered, and still Continues to suffer, for Want of Provisions has perhaps destroyed the finest Opportunity that could be presented of driving the Enemy's Advanced Posts, in all likelihood even unto Charles Town. Lord Cornwallis is believed to be gone to Savannah. — has weakened his Main Body at Camden, where Lord Rawdon commands, and withdrawn the Troops from Augusta, Cheraw and Anson Court House. I am astonished that I have no Intelligence of any Flour coming to me from the Interior part of the State. Your Ex^y cannot believe this miserable Country (already Ravaged by the Enemy, & gleaned by the Militia under the Generals Caswell and Rutherford) can afford an Handful to me. — I must believe from your Excellency's Letter, in answer to mine from Richmond, that you had thus done all you thought necessary to provide us. — I am anxious that this Letter should find your Excell^y and the Executive Council at Hillsborough, exerting all your Authority and Influence to supply your almost famish^d Troops — Flour and Rum are the Articles most in request in this Climate, which bad water contributes to render more unwholesome — Rum is as necessary to the Health of a Soldier as good Food — Without these, full Hospitals and a thin Army will be all that your State or the Congress can depend upon in the Southern Depart — for my own part, I have never lost one Moment in pressing the Army forward from the Instant I join^d it to this Moment; and when I can do more, more shall be done — Depend not, Sir, upon Commissaries, they will deceive you — depend only upon honest men of sound Whig Principles — and whose Souls are superior to sordid Gain — General Stevens, with the Virginia Militia, is halted at

Buffalo Ford, Fifty Miles in my Rear, and cannot proceed for Want of Provisions — I march To-morrow at Daybreak.

I am &c,

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Governor Nash.

P.S. General Rutherford's Division have Tents — I hope those I wrote for to your Excellency are in a fair Way to be sent forward.

NO. 29

Camp Masks' Ferry West side of Peedee

3^d August 1780

Sir

I have not received any answer to the Letters I had the Honor to write Your Excellency from Hillsboro. Since I joined the Army upon Deep River, my Distress has been inconceivable, of which the enclosed Copy of a Letter of this Days Date to Governor Nash will Convince your Excellency. I wish I could say the Supplies from Virginia had been a reproof to North Carolina. I am ashamed to say, their Backwardness rather countenances, than disgraces, their Sister State. What can the Executive Councils of both States believe will be the consequences of such unpardonable Neglect. I will yet hope your Excellency is doing all in your Power to supply your half starved Fellow Citizens. Flour, Rum and Drovers of Bullocks should without Delay be forwarded to this Army, or the Southern Department will soon want one to defend it. It has rained furiously for several Days, and our Militia are still without Tents; therefore I expect Desertions and the Hospital will speedily

leave Gen Stevens without any Command. I wish I could present your Excellency with a more pleasing Account of the Public Affairs this Way, but the Duty I owe to the United States obliges me to represent Things truly as they are. Colonel Harrison of the Artillery has been severely wounded in the Leg by a kick from a Horse, which splintered the Bone; he was left at Buffalo Ford on Deep River, and I am this day informed, is worse than when I parted from him. As the Time of his Recovery is uncertain, I beg the favor of your Exc^y to acquaint Lt. Col^o Carrington that it is my orders he forthwith join this Army. I would also request your Excell^y to order One Hundred Copies of the enclosed Proclamation to be immediately struck off and sent me by the Return of this Express.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Governor Jefferson

NO. 30

Peedee 3^d August 1780

Sir

The Governor will acquaint you with the Reason for my desiring your immediate Attendance in Camp, at the Time of writing to him, I was too much engaged to write to you particularly.

Before you leave Richmond, I desire you will see all the Musket Cartridges prepared and the Flints I mentioned to you sent forward with a Conductor. I hope to see you as soon as possible being with sentiments of Esteem, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Lieu^t Colonel Carrington of Artillery

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NO. 31

Camp at Mask's Ferry
on the West Side of Peedee
3^d August 1780 4 o'clock P.M..

Dear Sir

I am this Instant made exceedingly happy by the arrival of General Harrington with your Letter of yesterday's Date from Thomson's Creek. I shall march at Day-break and most assuredly will give you the meeting, at the Point agreed upon.

The Violent Rains have had their Effect upon me, as well as yourself, but we are again dry — and have with infinite Difficulty cross^d every Thing to the West Side of Peedee — As this goes by an accidental Conveyance, I shall only add that I am with much respect, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Major Gen^l Caswell

NO. 32

Camp Mask's Ferry
3^d August 1780

Dear Colonel

Notwithstanding every Exertion, I shall not be able to get the Artillery and Stores over the River before twelve o'clock, so shall not march until Tomorrow Morning at daylight — in the Mean-time I must request you to go — with your Regiment — or, if you think a less party will do, to detach an Active Sensible Officer with a proper Escort to Thomson's Creek, and immediately drive the Cattle you mention to my Camp — Inclosed is the Paper you wished me to return — With regard I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel Porterfield

NO. 33

Camp 18 Miles West of
Peedee River 4th Aug^t 1780

Sir

In Consequence of your informing me that "If the Cavalry are called into the Field in their present Situation, Nothing but their Ruin can ensue," I am induced to withdraw my last Order to you from Hillsborough, and to desire you will not lose an Instant after they are equipped for Service, in marching the First and third Regiments of Light Dragoons to this Army.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel White

NO. 34

The Morning of the 5th August 1780
2 o'clock

Sir:

Gen^l Williams has this Moment delivered me your Letter dated this Day. I have given him my order to Co^l Porterfield, who is 10 miles advanced of me, to march immediately to join you. I shall proceed at 4 o'clock with the 1st M B and will join you with the utmost Expedition, I can march. The men are exceedingly beat out with the last Days' March; but much more so with the want of Meale or Flour, neither of which have they had for several Days past. The attempt you propose I am ready to cooperate in, not doubting but your Intelligence may be depended upon; and that you have the best guides.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To General Caswell

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NO. 35

Camp Anderson's in South Carolina
6th August 1780

Sir,

I am to desire that you will forthwith proceed to Peedee and take such a position for your Head Quarters as may be most convenient for the executing the Service you are intended by these Instructions to perform. That being done you will acquaint all the Colonels or Officers commanding Regiments

of Militia that I have appointed you to be commanding General of the whole of the Militia upon both side of the River Peedee, from Cheraw District, to the District at the Mouth of the said River both inclusive. You will call out such Proportions of the said militia only as are necessary for immediate Service, not more than One half at a Time (but this is not to be understood to preclude you from accepting any Volunteers that may offer to serve). You have likewise in case of Vacancy from any cause full Power and Authority from me: to Grant Brevet Commission to any person capable of taking command of a Regim^t of Militia: — to direct and in my Name authorize him in like manner to fill up vacant Commissions in His Corps. — When you have collected and organized a Body of Militia fit for a General Officers command, you will make your Returns and Report to me in writing, and I shall thereupon give Orders and Directions for the particular Service, which the Public Interest renders it necessary you should perform.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Gen^l Harrington

NO. 36

Camp at Little Black Creek
7th August 1780

Sir

Having yesterday delivered you your Public Orders; in respect to your Command and Management of the Militia on both sides of the River Peedee: — I am now to request your particular attention to an Enterprise of much Utility to the United States, and great Glory to yourself: — it is no less Sir, than the Surprise and Conquest of the Enemy in their Post at George Town.

— You have therefore my orders and Directions to proceed in that important Business, most rapidly; though at the same Time apparently, as if your other Command; was the sole Reason of your being detached. — Let your First Object be, to select from the Militia and Troops under your Command — a Chosen Band, fit to execute the intended Service. — Secondly be vigilant to procure every possible Information, of the Strength of the Enemy's Garrison at that Post, their works, their weak Side &c. When these are obtained, you will determine your Plan of Attack; which I recommend to you (if no unforeseen circumstances prevent) at half an Hour before Daybreak. When you have subdued the Garrison, you will if possible, secure the Magazine for the Use of the Troops of the United States in the Southern Department — You will send the Prisoners of the Royal Army to Richmond in Virginia, under a proper Escort and the Tories of South and North Carolina to Newbern.

Reposing especial Confidence in your Courage, Experience and Wisdom, I rely that all your natural and acquired talents

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will be exerted to obtain success in a Conquest, that must redound so much to your Honor and prove in its Consequences so beneficial to the United States. — I must likewise recommend to your particular attention the Situation of those unfortunate Men who have been obliged to take the Oath of allegiance to the then prevailing Power of Great Britain — to whom you will be pleased to follow the Line of Conduct laid down in my Letter of Instructions to the officers Commanding Militia Regiments in this State. — In a firm Belief that you will do everything that the best officer can do to obtain success,

I rest &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To General Harrington

NO. 37

Head Quarters near Anderson's Creek Cross Roads

7th Augt 1780

Dear Col^o

After a rapid March of Forty Miles in two Days, we have arrived within Fourteen Miles of the Enemy's Post at Lynch's Creek, but they have prudently thought proper to decamp last night for Camden. We here form^d a junction with Major Gen^l Caswell whose numerous Division is well found well arm^d and accoutred and eager for Action. — Upon the Whole we form an army fully sufficient to drive our late insulting Foes to Charles Town, without the considerable Reinforcements which are coming up. — General Gates (who now commands in chief in the Southern Department) desires to be particularly acquainted with your Situation, and any Late Intelligence you may have collected. He would therefore be glad if you would send him a Confidential Officer, well instructed upon the necessary Points, immediately — if you should not be able to spare an Officer, you will be pleased to write fully, but so as to be calculated for accidents — The State of Provisions in your neighborhood, should be particularly attended to, and Intelligence concerning it, immediately sent.

I am &c

By Order of Gen^l Gates,

Pinckney, Major

To Colonel Sumpter.

Camp Lynch's Creek
8th August 1780

Sir

You will be pleased to proceed immediately on the Rout which the Enemy have taken, with the Virginia Troops, the Light Infantry of General Caswell's Division, and the Detachment of Cavalry which is ordered to join you, under your Command. Your object will be to hang upon the Enemy's Rear; to harass them as much as lies in your Power, and to take every Advantage which Circumstances may offer. — I place so entire a Confidence in your Military Abilities, Prudence and Courage, that I leave the conduct of your operations altogether to your own Discretion, not doubting that you will distress the Enemy as much as lies in your Power; without hazarding too much the Troops under your Command. I shall order a Body of 600 men to march early in the evening to support your Detachment. — A Deserter who is lately come in, gives Intelligence that the Enemy halted this Morning on an Eminence four miles beyond Little

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Lynch's Creek; where they purpose to remain till the cool of the Evening.

[I am &c] [\[110\]](#)

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel Porterfield

Head Quarters 9th August 1780

Sir

The Object to be effected by the Detachment under your Command, is to support Lt. Col^o Porterfield, who is advanced with a Body of Light Troops, to harass the Enemy's Rear. You will therefore be pleased to proceed Six Miles, on the Road leading to Camden by Little Lynch's Creek; where you will take an advantageous Position, and remain till you shall receive further Orders from me, or shall find it necessary to advance in support of Colonel Porterfield. Colonel Senf, Chief Engineer will proceed, with a Party to reconnoiter the Ground and fix an Encampment for the Army; to which I shall advance as soon as the whole is in a proper situation to march.

[I am, &c] [\[110\]](#)

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Colonel Hall

NO. 40

Head Quarters American Army
S^o Dept
9th August, 1780

Sir

The Baron de Kalb has communicated to me a Letter which he had the Honor of receiving from your Lordship, on the subject of Captain M^cCallister's Conduct while within your Lines with a Flag of Truce. The Accusation gave me much pain — from which I was happy in being released, by Captain M^cCallister's explanation of his Transactions. The Letter address^d to M^r. Rugely on which the Suspicions were chiefly founded, he

assures me was Nothing more than a short Introductory Letter unsealed, from Major Pinckney of South Carolina to M^r. Rugely, recommending Captain M^cCallister to the Common Offices of Hospitality, from which the Character he was in, certainly did not preclude him — and of which the Want of Public Accommodations upon the Road induced him to make Use of. On Capⁿ M^cCallister's Arrival at M^r. Rugely's escorted by one of your officers, he delivered the Letter in Question to a Lady, whom he mistook for M^{rs}. Rugely, but on being apprized of his mistake, desired her to restore it, with a View of delivering it to M^r. Rugely, if he should meet with him. Major Pinckney, who is now in my Family, likewise assures me that he gave a Letter to Captain M^cCallister to the above purport, and contained nothing more. With respect to discourses held by this Gentlemen with any Person within your Lines, he declares that he spoke with nobody whatever unless by your Lordship's Permission with Doctor Charlton, in presence of a british Officer — and to some Persons on the Road, who came up and address^d him, in presence and within hearing of the Officer who was sent to escort him. I have thought it necessary to be thus particular in the Detail of Circumstances, as well for the Honor of the American Army, as to obviate any Imputation which may be cast on a Young Gentleman of Character, who has received Marks of Favor from Congress, for his distinguished Exertions in the

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Military Line; and whose Feelings are much hurt, by an Accusation being brought against him, which he is conscious that he has not merited. I have, however, Sir, complied with your Requisition with respect to the Mode of Communication, which I trust will be equally pursued by your Lordship.

I have the Honor, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Lord Rawdon
Commanding the British Forces
S^o Carolina in the absence of
Lord Cornwallis

NO. 41

Camp Rugely's 15th August 1780

Sir

You will immediately proceed with the Troop of Volunteer Horse under your Command to M^t Bartholomew's Parish where you will collect as many Volunteers as are willing to join your Corps. If you shall raise three or more Troops (you may raise forty Men in each) — You will act yourself as Major; and are hereby authorized to appoint a Captain, Two Subaltern Officers to each Troop under your Command. As soon as you have collected your Men you will endeavor to join the Army, unless the situation of the Country where you may be should immediately require your Presence. You will regulate your Conduct to the Inhabitants by the Line laid down in my Proclamation, and totally discountenance every Species of plundering and marauding under any Pretence whatever.

[I am, &c] [\[110\]](#)

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Capⁿ Hawkins Martin

NO. 42

Sir

In the deepest Distress and Anxiety of Mind, I am obliged to acquaint your Excellency with the Total Defeat of the Troops under my Command. — I arrived with the Maryland Line, the Artillery and North Carolina Militia on the 13th Instant at Rugely's, 13 miles from Camden, took post there, and was the next Day joined by Gen^l Stevens with 700 Militia from Virginia — Colonel Sumpter, who was at the Waxhaws, had the Sunday before, with 400 S^o Carolinians kill^d and taken 300 of the Enemy, who were posted at Hanging Rocks; this and other Strokes upon the Enemy's Advanced posts occasioned their calling all their Outposts to Camden. — The 15th, at Daybreak, I reinforced Colonel Sumpter with 300 North Carolina Militia, 100 of the Mary^d Line and two Three pounders from the Artillery; having previously ordered him to march from the Waxhaws, and directed, as soon as the Reinforcements joined him he should proceed down the Wateree opposite to Camden, intercept any Stores coming to the Enemy, and particularly their Troops from 96 — who were likewise withdrawn from that Post. — This was well executed by Colonel Sumpter, as his Letter enclosed will shew. — Having communicated my plans to the General Officers in the Afternoon of the 15th Instant, it was resolved to march at 10 at Night, to take post in an Advantageous Situation, with a Deep Creek in Front, Seven Miles from Camden. — The Heavy Baggage, &c, being ordered to march mediately

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by the Waxhaws Road — At Ten the Army began their march in the following Order — Colonel Armand's Legion in Front, supported on both Flanks by Col^o Porterfield's Regiment and the Light Infantry of the Militia. — The Advanced Guard of Infantry. The Maryland Line with their Artillery in Front of the Brigades. — The North Carolina Militia — The Virginia Militia — The Artillery Stores, &c, and the Rear Guard — Having marched

about Five Miles, the Legion was charged by the Enemy's Cavalry, and well supported on the Flanks as they were ordered by Colonel Porterfield, who beat back the Enemy's Horse, and was himself unfortunately wounded; but the Enemy's Infantry advancing with a heavy fire — the Troops in Front gave way, even to the Front of the First Maryland Brigade, and a Confusion ensued, which took some time to regulate. At Length the Army was ranged in Line of Battle in the following Order — General Gist's Brigade upon the Right — with His Right close to a Swamp — The North Carolina Militia in the Centre, — and the Virginia Militia, with the Light infantry and Porterfield's Corps, upon the Left. — The Artillery divided to the Brigades — and the First Maryland Brigades as a Corps de Reserve, and to cover the Cannon on the Road at a proper distance in the Rear — Colonel Armand's Corps were Ordered to the Left to support the Left Flank and oppose the enemy's Cavalry. — At day Light the Enemy attacked, and drove in our Light Parties in Front, when I ordered our Left to advance and attack the Enemy — but, to my Astonishment, the Left Wing and North Carolina Militia gave Way. General Caswell and Myself, assisted by a number of Officers did all in our Power to rally the broken Troops, but to no purpose; for the Enemy's Cavalry, coming round the Left Flank of the Maryland Division, Completed the Rout of the Whole of the Militia, who left the Continentals alone, to oppose the Enemy's Whole Force. — I then endeavored with General Caswell to rally the Militia at some Distance, on an advantageous piece of ground, but the Enemy's Cavalry continuing to harass their Rear, they ran like a Torrent, and bore all before them. This being the situation of General Caswell and myself at a pass [\[105\]](#); the Militia pressing us forward, and the Enemy's Cavalry pursuing, we were obliged to Retreat with them — hoping yet that a few miles in the Rear they might recover from their panic, and again be brought into order; — but this likewise prov^d in vain — and the Firing in a Manner ceasing in the Rear — there was no hopes that the Maryland Division, had any longer sustained the Attack of the Enemy's Whole Infantry. — Though overpowered by numbers their bravery is highly to be commended and honoured, as they made as great an opposition as it was possible so small a Force could make against one so vastly superior. By

this time the Militia had taken the Woods in all directions, and I concluded with General Caswell to retire towards Charlotte, I got there late in the night — but reflecting that there was neither Army, Ammunition, nor any prospect of collecting any Force at that Place, adequate to the Defence of the Country I proceeded with

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all possible Despatch hither: — to endeavor to fall upon some Plan, in conjunction with the Legislature of this State, for the Defense of so much thereof as it is yet possible to save from the Enemy — I shall immediately Despatch a Flag to Lord Cornwallis to know the Situation of our wounded — the number of Prisoners and Condition in his Hands — I send this Letter open to the Governor of Virginia that he may take proper measures in the present Emergency. He will Seale and forward it immediately by the Bearers Col^o Senf and Major Magill my Aid de Camp — who are well acquainted with all the Circumstances of my march, from where I joined General de Kalb, to the unfortunate Hour of the Defeat. The Distresses of the Campaign previous thereto, almost exceed Description. Famine, Want of Tents for the Militia, and of every Comfort necessary for the Troops in this unwholesome Climate has no doubt, in a Degree, contributed to our Ruin. Had it been practicable to have rallied the Militia at any given Distance from the Field of Battle, and could I have even Collected Ammunition and a Magazine; there was no making a Post properly defencible; as I had not any Intrenching Tools — a Want which I so long represented. We lost only Eight Pieces of Cannon in the Action. Baron de Kalb having been obliged to leave the Rest on the East Side of Roanoak, and at Hillsborough, but most assuredly the small arms are gone, for those that the Enemy did not take are carried off by the Militia. I mention this that proper Measures may be taken to supply Arms. It is a considerable Consolation to my Mind, that I never made any Movement of Importance, or took any considerable measure, without the consent and approbation of all the General officers, and particular in the Night of the 15th, after the First attack of the Enemy — they gave their unanimous opinions,

that there was no retreating with Safety, and that a Battle must be fought at all Events. — Seized with a violent Disorder, occasioned by the Fatigues I have undergone, I must entreat the Indulgence of Congress, for the defects of this Letter, and have therefore sent Colonel Senf Chief Engineer and my Aid de Camp Major Magill to answer any Questions and clear up every Doubt, that can be suggested — to whom I beg leave to refer your Excellency and that Honble Body. With Sentiments of the greatest Regard & Respect &c.

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To the President of Congress

NO. 43

Hillsborough 22^d August 1780

Dear Gen^l

Upon my Arrival at Charlotte the Night of the 16th Instant, I reflected there were neither Army Ammunition or Intrenching Tools, and that to think of maintaining that post without these was risking a Second Loss perhaps greater than the First. I therefore resolved to proceed directly hither, to give Orders for assembling the Continental Troops on the March from Virginia, to direct the Three Corps of Horse at X Creek to cover the stores &c there, and to urge the Resources of Virginia to be drawn forth for our Support. I also have forwarded some Volunteer Horse

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towards P. D. and upon other Roads Westward, to succour our People and Waggon's retiring from the Enemy. Captain Richmond informed me last night you had halted at Charlotte, and was assembling Militia there. I may be mistaken but with all deference to your opinions I think Salisbury a better

Position; as it brings our Force, and that what we hope to collect, more within supporting Distance of each other, and certainly covers the Country more effectually. Now should the Enemy march out with a superior force to Charlotte, wanting the proper Means of Defence, you must be obliged to retire, which I hope you will then be able to do towards Salisbury. I hope Colonel Sumpter is yet on the West Side of the Wateree, as I am confident he gives the Enemy infinitely more jealousy by remaining there, than he can possibly do by joining you, for in that Case they would have only one Object to attend to. My Despatches to Congress, the Governor of Virginia, &c, went off yesterday by Colonel Senf and Major Magill. Governor Nash, the Speaker of Assembly, and part of the Legislature, are assembled here. I have conferred with them, and believe such powers will be immediately lodged in the Executive Council as will be absolute for the time. M^r. Mallet declines taking any more State Paper, or acting officially as a State Commissary Gen^l. I shall therefore deposite in His Hand such Draughts, &c as will enable him to carry on the Business upon the Continental Account. Whatever you recommend upon this Head, I will do, and your opinion of the places where provision and carriages should be collected shall have full Weight with me — for the present I have mentioned Salisbury, Hillsborough and X Creek, and the East Side of Taylor's Ferry, but as the last depends upon Virginia, I have recommended that Measure to the Executive of that State. While I continue in office will exert my utmost to serve the public Interest, but as unfortunate Generals are most commonly recalled, I expect that will be my Case, and some other Continental General of Rank, sent in my Place to Command. When he arrives I shall give him every Advice and Information in my power — in the Mean Time I doubt not Sir, that the Candour and Friendship, that has subsisted between us, will continue, and that you are infinitely superior to the ungenerous Custom of the many who without benefiting themselves constantly hunt down the unfortunate. I shall be happy to hear from you by the First Express — who, you will be careful, is properly escorted. — Every Reinforcement from Virginia and the Eastern Parts of this State shall be collected, and your opinions in the Disposal thereof, shall have due Weight.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Major General Caswell

NO. 44

Hillsborough 24th August 1780

Dear General

Upon my Arrival here, I instantly Despatched Messengers to Congress, to the Governor of Virginia, and to every Post and Person that the Public Service required to be sent to. Upon consulting

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with the Governor and Executive of this State I am convinced it is highly proper I should immediately determine to make this place the General Rendezvous of the Southern Army, from whence and only from whence we can be provided with what is absolutely necessary, for our Acting offensively or defensively as occasion shall offer. I must therefore request you will March the Maryland Line, and such of the artillery Officers and Men, as may be with you, by the Rout of Guilford Court House, directly to Hillsborough. I am happy, as my misfortunes will permit me to be, in hearing of yours and Gest's Safety, and so many of my ever Honored Continental Friends have escaped from the Enemy.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brigadier Gen Smallwood

NO. 45

Hillsborough 27th August 1780

Sir

I have this Moment seen your Letter of the 22^d Ins^t to Gov^r Nash, and finding from thence, that you are in a condition to make a stand upon the East Side of the Yadkin, near the Ford, I revoke my orders to you in my Letter of the 24th Ins^t and request you will continue in that Position. I have a Letter dated the 12th of this Month from Governor Jefferson; he writes therein that General Muhlenberg had just equipped 500 Continental Troops who would march in a Day or two to join the Southern Army. I shall send an Express to meet them, and order the Commanding officer to march directly to the Yadkin. The instant he arrives you will march hither to be equip^d. I have sent Purchasers to every Place, where anything that is proper for Cloathing the Continental Troops can be procured. My respectful Compliments waite on General Gist and the Gentlemen of the Maryland Line.

I am, &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To Brigadier Gen^l Smallwood

P.S. 234 of the Continental are come into this place.

NO. 46

Hillsborough 28th August 1780

Sir

It was only yesterday that I had the Honor to receive your Excellency's Letter from Philadelphia, dated the 6th July last — I am happy to acknowledge it so immediately — I shall in a few Days write very circumstantially, and particularly upon the Subjects your Excellency wishes to have explained — In the mean Time I must beg you to have reference to my Letters to Congress and General Washington, which President Huntington will Communicate to your Excellency — We have had a severe Rebuke, but our affairs are by no means desperate — Long before the great decisive Strokes are struck at New York and in the West Indies — all will be reinstated in this Quarter — Your Excellency is both a Soldier and a Politician, but it hardly comes within your Experience or your reading to match the Variety of Wants and Difficulties I have met with in this Campaign — The fall of that excellent Officer, the Baron de Kalb — so much to be regretted by

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France and the United States, has made my Misfortunes more poignant, but I believe the Day is fast Approaching when our Enemies will have little Reason to rejoice in the Victory they have gained.

Colonel Malmady requests I would make him the Bearer of this Letter — but he has no further Commission from me to your Excellency. With Sentiments of the Highest Esteem, &c.,

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

His Excellency Le Chevallier La Luzerne.

Head Quarters 29th August 1780

Sir

By this Flag I take the Liberty to request your Lordship will please to permit the Bearer, Doctor Johnson, Physician and Surgeon of the General Hospital of the Army, and Captain Drew, of Lt Col^o Porterfield's Corps, to visit and attend the Sick and Wounded Officers and Soldiers that were taken by your Lordship in the Action of the 16th ins^t, and afterwards from Colonel Sumpter — Both of these Men are of strict honor and probity, and I can be answerable they will not in any the Smallest Instance forfeit the Indulgence you are pleased to grant them — I must further entreat the Favor that your Lordship will please to permit Lieu^t. Col^o Dubuysson, Aid de Camp to the Baron de Kalb, to go to Philadelphia upon Parole, as he has the Baron's Dying Directions with Regard to his private Family Concerns as well in France as America — The Baggage and Papers belong to the Baron are sent thither, where they are to remain until Colonel Dubuysson's Arrival — I am to thank your Lordship for the Attention and Tenderness with which Captain Hamilton assures me the Wounded and Prisoners have been treated at Camden — It has been an invariable Rule with me to observe the like Generous Lenity to all that have fallen into my Hands. Of this Fact Doctor Macnamara Hayes is a good Evidence

With Sentiments of high Regard &c,

H[ORATIO] G[ATES],

M. Gen^{lh} & Com^r in Chief
Southern Army
To Lord Cornwallis.

Hillsborough 30 August 1780

Sir

I have the Honor to enclose you for the Perusal of Congress my Letter of this Date to General Washington — I beg it may be Sealed and sent with the First Despatch to His Exc^y. — I have made application to this State and Virginia for each of them to furnish the Articles mentioned in the inclosed List. The Gov^r and Legislature of this State will meet here this Day — I have the strongest Assurances from Governor Nash that my Requisition will without Hesitation be complied with. I leave the Vote of Men to be raised entirely to the States, thinking they will not in the present Emergency require any Incentive more pressing to prevail upon them to provide sufficiently for the public Service — I must request Congress will make such a Requisition from the State of Maryland as they can most conveniently comply with consistent

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with the Damands for the supply of the Main Army and the Fleet of our Allies — as there is a ready Navigation to Petersburg in Virginia from all parts of Chesapeak Bay and River Potowmack — Such Grain and Corn as can be spared for the S^o Army may at Times be safely sent there — In answer to a Letter from his Exc^y the Ambassador of France, which I received the Day before yesterday, I have refered him to Y^r Exc^y for the Perusal of my Letter to Congress and Gen^l Washington, and acquainted the Chevallier that I shall in a few Days endeavor to answer him very particularly, to all and every Part of his Letter to me. This Letter goes with a flying Seal, open to the Governor of Virginia; he will peruse and forward it to Y^r. Excellency.

I am &c,

H[ORATIO] G[ATES],

To His Excellency the President of Congress

NO. 49

Hillsboro 30th August 1780

Sir

The inclosed Pacquets for Congress and General Washington I send with flying Seals, that you may peruse them; but I must request they may not be delayed, but sent forward with the utmost Despatch to Philadelphia. — Your Exc^y will please to be careful to put the proper papers to each, in the right cover, and seale only the cover you send them in to Congress. The Requisition addressed to your State I cannot but believe will as soon as possible be furnished. This State, Governor Nash assures me, will not hesitate an instant in supplying their Part. General Stevens informs me he has wrote frequently since our unfortunate Defeat to your Exc^{lly} — he marched from hence yesterday, with what remained of your Militia (about 400) they are to be stationed for a Time at Guildford Court House. Four Hundred deserted in the last two Days they were here — and the General is apprehensive, he shall very soon be left by many of those that went with him from hence — In your Letter of the 12th Instant you mention 500 Regulars, being just fitted, and ready to march from Petersburg. I wish they were here — but as yet I have no Intelligence of their being upon the march. — I beg Sir, they may be expedited to this Place, I shall do my utmost to procure the best Intelligence of the Motions of the Enemy — of which Sir you may depend upon my giving the earliest Information in my power.

I am &c

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To His Exc^y Governor Jefferson.

Hillsborough 30th August 1780

Sir

My public Letter to Congress has surely been transmitted to yr Exc^{lly} — Since then, I have been able to collect authentic Returns of the killed wounded and missing of the Officers of the Maryland Line, Artillerist and those of the Legion under Col^o Armand. They are inclosed. The Militia broke early in the Day, and Scattered in so many Directions upon their Retreat, that very few have fallen into the Hands of the Enemy. — By the Firmness and Bravery of the Continental Troops the victory is far

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from Bloodless on the part of the Foe; — they having upward of 500 men with officers in proportion kill^d and wounded. I do not think L^d Cornwallis will be able to reap any advantage of consequence from his Victory. — as this State seems animated to re-instate and support the Army. Virginia I am confident, will not be less patriotic — and by the joint Exertions of the two States, there is good Reason to hope, that should the Events of the Campaign be prosperous to your Excellency; all South Carolina might be again recovered. L^d Cornwallis remained with his Army at Camden, when I received the last accounts from thence; — I am cantoning ours at Salisbury, Guilford, Hillsborough and Cross Creek. The Marylanders and Artillerists, with the General Hospital, will be here. The Cavalry near Cross Creek and the Militia to the westward. This is absolutely necessary, as we have no Magazines of Provisions, and are only supplied from Hand to Mouth — Two Days after the Action of the 16th ult^o — Fortune seems determined to continue to distress us — for Colonel Sumpter, having marched near Forty

Miles up the River Wateree, halted with the Waggon and Prisoners he had taken the 15th. By some Indiscretion the men were surprised cut off from their arms — the whole routed, and the Waggon and Prisoners retaken.

What encouragement the numerous Disaffected in this State may give Lord Cornwallis to advance further into the Country; I cannot yet say. Colonel Sumpter since his Surprise and Defeat upon the West Side of the Wateree, has reinstated and increased his Corps to upward of 1000 men. I have directed him to continue to harass the Enemy upon that Side. Lord Cornwallis will therefore be cautious how he makes any considerable movement to the Eastward, while this Corps remains upon his Left Flank — and the Main Army is in a manner cantoned on his Front. Anxious for the Public Good I shall continue my unwearied Endeavors to stop the Progress of the Enemy — to reinstate our affairs — to recommence an Offensive War, and recover all our Losses in the Southern States. But if being unfortunate is solely a Reason sufficient for removing me from Command I shall most cheerfully submit to the Orders of Congress; and resign an office few Generals would be anxious to possess — and where the utmost skill and Fortitude is so subject to be baffled by the difficulties which must for a Time, surround, the Chief in Command here.

That your Excellency may meet with no such Difficulties — that your Road to Fame and Fortune may be smooth and easy is the Sincere wish of &c &c.

H[ORATIO] G[ATES]

To His Excell^y Gen^l Washington.

P. S. Your command in respect to the Virg^a Line shall be obeyed.

Sir,

I had the Honor to receive your Letter of 1st Ins^t., with that from His Excell^y Gen^l Washington inclosed, dated 18th July. I am glad you opened the General's Letter, as it gave you the earlier his directions for the Re-establishment of the Virginia Line — lest

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there should be any Mistake, I now return you His Excellency's Letter, and request that you will with the nicest Exactness obey his Orders. The Governor acquainted me in his Letter of the 12th Instant that 500 Continentals, under Colonel Gibson, would be ready to march in a few Days to join this Army — I desire, Sir, no Time may be lost in pushing forward this Reinforcement, as we are in great Want of them. I pray you to repeat your Orders to Colonel Gibson upon this Head — and shall be much obliged to you to inform me from Time to Time the progress you make in collecting the New Levies.

With sentiments &c,

H[ORATIO] G[ATES].

To General Muhlenberg

II

ORDERS ISSUED BY MAJOR GENL GATES
WHILE COMMANDING THE SOUTH-
ERN ARMY, JULY 26TH
TO AUGUST 31ST
1780

Communicated by [Thomas Addis Emmet, M. D.](#)

HEAD QUARTERS BUFFALO FORD

July 26th 1780

Parole, The United States. Countersign, Bourbon.

Of the Day Tomorrow,..Colonel HALL,

The standing orders of Major General de Kalb to be obeyed. The Troops to hold themselves in readiness to march at an Hour's warning.

The Army may be satisfied that such Measures are taken, and have for some time past been taking by Congress and the Executive Authority of all the Southern States from Delaware inclusive, that plenty will soon succeed, the late unavoidable Scarcity — Provisions, Rum, Salt, and every Requisite will flow into Camp, which shall then with a liberal Hand be distributed to the Army.

The General thanks the Troops for the Patience and perseverance with which they have endured the wants and hardships of the preceding part of the Campaign, and is satisfied that the future will add still more Lustre to the Renown they have acquired, and give Glory and Triumph to the American Arms.

The General congratulates the Army upon the amazing Efforts making by our High Allies in the West Indies and Europe, and in Conjunction with His Excellency Gen^l Washington's Army against New York, everywhere superior in Ships and Men, there is every Reason to Hope that this Campaign will decide the War, and give peace and Freedom to the United States.

As great Bodies of Militia are in full March from all Quarters to join the Army, the General earnestly recommends it to every Officer and Soldier in the Continental Service, to show the utmost Cordiality and Brotherly affection to them. Citizens, who not only contribute to every Expenditure of

War, but do also upon every pressing Emergency fly to Arms in defence of their invaded Country, deserve every Kindness, and will doubtless meet with every Friendly Indulgence from disciplined Troops.

All Parties detached from the Army are to be called in immediately.

The First Maryland Brigade furnishes the Captain's Picquett tomorrow.

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Each Brigade of the Maryland Division will form a Camp Guard of a Subaltern's Command.

The Second Maryland Brigade will furnish a Subaltern's Guard for the Commander in Chief Tomorrow.

AFTER ORDERS

July 26th 1780

The Troops will strike their Tents tomorrow at half an hour after 3 o'clock when the Baggage is to be loaded and the Whole to march by the Right, cross the Ford near to the present Encampment and proceed on the Road leading to Spinks's. — The Artillery and Baggage will march in the Rear of the Infantry.

Capⁿ Marburg D Q M G^l will march in Advance of the Infantry with the Quarter Masters, Pioneers, and Camp Colour Men escorted by Col^o Armand's Corps to Spinks's, where he will lay out the Encampment, and prepare for the arrival of the troops — Col^o Armand upon his arrival at Spinks's will reconnoiter the Roads and passes leading from thence to Cottons as well as westwardly and Northwardly from Spinks's. He will post Guards and Videtts, in proper places, in advance of the Camp, taking himself

the most advantageous Position for the Encampment of his own Corps. Co^l Marian, with the Volunteers Horse of S^o Carolina, will march with and attend the General. — When the Baggage arrives at Spinks's the Tents are to be pitched, but previous thereto the Guards and Pickets are to be posted by the Deputy Adjutant General, who will receive the Generals orders for that purpose,

The Troops are this evening to receive Flour to serve them to the 28th inclusive.

Such Stores, Forage &c as cannot be remov^d from the present Encampment must be left under a proper Guard, and remain until further orders.

The Prisoners to be march^d as usual under the Camp Guards.

Colonel Senf Chief Engineer will attend the General — Major Gen^l the Baron de Kalb, will please to lead the Line of March, and in all respects command and direct his Division, as heretofore in the Grand Army.

As the Troops are advancing towards the Enemy, the General requests the Baron de Kalb will direct the Brigadiers General to command every Officer and Soldier to keep his Platoon, Post, and Station, with the nicest exactness.

HEAD QUARTERS SPINKS'S

July 27th 1780

Parole, Congress. Countersign, Washington

Of the Day to-morrow,...Lt. Col^o Com^t ADAMS.

The Second Maryland Brigade furnishes the Picquett Guard Tomorrow.

The Quartermaster of Col Armand's Corps will present his Returns for Provisions to the issuing Commander of the First Maryland Brigade, who is directed to issue thereon as soon as the Flour and other provisions arrive.

The Army marches by the Left Tomorrow Morning at 3 o'clock. The Artillery in the Rear of the Infantry, and the Baggage will follow in like order. The D Q M Gen^l with the Qu^r

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Mas^{rs} Pioneers &c, will precede the army by the nearest Rout to Cottons. Colonel Armand will march in front as usual.

HQ COTTONS
July 28th 1780

Parole, France. Countersign, Spain

Of the Day To-morrow,...Lt. Col^o Com^t Woodford

The Troops to march To-morrow Morning by the Right, at the same Hour and in the same Order as they march^d from Deep River.

The near approach to South Carolina will incline the officers to be particularly attentive in preserving an exact and regular Line of March — As the Late and present Scarcity of Flour has been unavoidable, the General is happy to declare that he has reason to believe the ensuing Plenty will enable him to afford a generous supply to the Army.

The First Maryland Brigade furnishes the Picquett to-morrow.

H. Q. KIMBOROUGH'S

29th July 1780

Parole, Guichen. Countersign, Jamaica.

Of the Day to-morrow,...Lt. Colonel FORD

The Troops will refresh and clean themselves to-morrow at the present Encampment. The officers commanding Regiments and Companies will make a Minute Inspection into the State of the Arms and Accoutrements, Ammunition Flints &c have them put into the best order, and see that all Deficiencies are immediately supplied by Returns to the Conductor of Military Stores.

H. Q. KIMBOROUGH'S,
30th July 1780

Parole, D'Estaing Countersign, New York

Of the Day To-morrow,...Lt. Col^o VAUGHAN

The General is much dissatisfied to see almost every good Regulation in the order of March continually violated, by Arms and Accoutrements being frequently thrown into the Waggon, and this by some of the Baggage Guard, and even by the Sentinels — Women frequently permitted to ride in the Waggon — sometimes two in one Waggon — This exclusive of the Delay it occasions to the Line of March is an Incumbrance to the teams, and much fatigues the Horses — It is positively forbid in Future — None but very sick Men should at any Time have this Indulgence. The order and Compactness of the Line of March is shamefully broken by the Waggoners being Sometimes suffered to halt for frivolous Reasons — This throws out the weak Teams which cannot for the Whole Day afterwards recover their Distance. The Waggon Masters are to be answerable that this does not happen again — Their Neglect of Duty is the main Cause of most of the

Irregularities and Breaches in the Line of March — they must reform or be dismissed the Service. The General wishes the Commanding Officer of Artillery would so conduct his March as to Keep the Guns and their Trains close in the Rear of the Infantry, very bad Consequences may happen from their falling so far behind.

The General requests the Brigadiers Gen^l the Field Officers and every other Officer commanding a Platoon or Division,

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to be exact in reforming every abuse, that has crept in, to the prejudice of Good Order and Discipline a greater Disgrace cannot fall upon Regular Troops, than to be found by their Enemies in Disorder. The General trusts those under his Command will not be so dishonored.

Lieu^t William Pendergast of the Fifth Mary^d Reg^t, is appointed Commissary General of Issues to the Southern Army — He is to be respected and obeyed as such. The Troops to march To-morrow Morning at three o'clock by the Left. The Dep^y Q M Gen^l Captain Marburg will see that the Pioneers are not suffered to be negligent in the Execution of their Duty — that they repair all bad Places in the Road and do their Utmost to expedite the March of the Artillery and Waggon. The Commanding Officer of Artillery and Col^o Armand will each of them furnish the D Q M Gen^l with two Empty Waggon with the Drivers and teams belonging to them, they are to be delivered to the Commanding Officers of such Corps whose Baggage yesterday by the failure of their Teams unavoidably left by the Way.

H.Q. KIMBOROUGH'S

July 31st 1780

Parole, Caswell. Countersign, Rutherford

Of the Day Tomorrow,...Major WINDER

The Violence of the Storm obliging the Troops to be halted to-day. They are to be prepared to march in the order and at the same Hour to-morrow Morning as was directed in yesterday's Orders.

CAMP AT MASK'S FERRY,
Peedee River, 1st August 1780

Parole, Maryland. Countersign, Annapolis

Of the Day Tomorrow,...Major ANDERSON

The Second Maryland Brigade will cross the Ferry this afternoon. The First Brigade, with the Artillery will encamp on the East Side of Peedee.

H. Q. MASQUE'S FERRY, P.D.
2^d August 1780

Parole, Jersey. Countersign, Philadelphia

Of the Day Tomorrow,...Major DEANE

The General feels most sensibly the Scarcity the Troops are at present obliged to suffer which is entirely occasioned by the violent Rains having stop^d the Supplies coming from the Eastward, but this Grievance as it is entirely accidental the troops will bear with that manly Fortitude which has always distinguished the Maryland Line — No Distress or Wants in the Generals Power to remedy shall ever be known to them.

When the First Brigade and all the Artillery and Baggage have pass^d the Ferry, they are to halt and encamp — The weather being fair the whole will

march To-morrow Morning at five o'clock to De Luis, 10 Miles —

Colonel Porterfield's Regiment will march as soon as it clears away to DeLuis.

When the General beats Col^o Armand, with his Corps, will march in Front of the Line. — The General views with anxiety the amazing Loads of Baggage that is dragg^d after the troops; he requests that the Brigadiers General will digest a plan for lessening it immediately

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— As a Field officers Guard from the Virginia Militia will be established at this Ferry, a careful Person may be left with any heavy Baggage at present superfluous from each Brigade, at M^r. Brown's, upon the East side of the River Peedee; they will be protected by the Virginia Militia Guards.

HEAD QUARTERS MASK'S FERRY,
3rd August 1780

Parole, Rhode Island. Countersign, Jersey

Of the Day to-morrow, Major HARDMAN.

The Artillery and Baggage not being able to Cross so early as was expected this Morning, the Troops are not to march until Day break To-morrow — Two Days' Beef is ready to be delivered to the Troops; the Commissaries of Brigades can receive it ready slaughtered on the opposite Bank of the River. The General is happy to acquaint the Troops that a Number of Waggons with Rum, &c, will arrive this Day at our last Encampment; it is ordered forward and will be served to the Troops at their next halt — Major John Armstrong is appointed Dep^y Adjutant General to the Southern Army, Major Thomas Pinkney and Captain De Veaux, Aid de Camp to the Commander in Chief;

all Orders, written or verbal, coming from either of them are to be obeyed.

As the Chief Engineer Colonel Senf will in time of action act as a Aid de Camp, he is then to be considered as such.

Colonel Senf will trace out a Redoubt on the West Bank of the River, to cover the Ferry; this Work is to be executed by the Field Officer's Guard of Militia who are ordered to remain at the Ferry.

M^r. Christopher Richmond is appointed Secretary to the Commander in Chief; he is to be respected as such —

The Troops march to-morrow by the Right

HEAD QUARTERS MAY MILL
August 4 1780

Parole, Charles Town. Countersign, So. Carolina.

Of the Day To-morrow, Major PATTEN

The Troops will march To-morrow Morning at 4 o'clock by the Right. The General to beat at half an Hour after 3 o'clock. The Junction of the Troops under Major General Caswell and Brigadier Gen^l Rutherford with the Maryland Line will be formed To-morrow near Anderson's, 17 miles from this Camp; from thence and other Circumstances the General has every Reason to hope the Laboring Oar will soon be put upon the Enemy, and that the Army he has the Honor to command will reap the Reward of their Sufferings and Labor. The exactest Discipline is at all Times right, but most essentially so when the Enemy think to take advantage of our Neglect. The General, therefore, repeats his Desire that the Troops may upon their March To-morrow, as well as upon all Future Occasions, Conduct themselves as though they were every Hour to apprehend a Surprise — It has never yet

been found that Americans were deficient or inferior to Britons, when fairly opposed to them in Battle. This Army will not, therefore, he is confident, be overreached by Military Tricks.

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H[EAD] Q[UARTERS] DEEP CREEK

5th August 1780

Parole, Massachusetts. Countersign, Boston

Of the Day To-morrow, Major ROXBURGH.

H[EAD] Q[UARTERS] DEEP CREEK

6 August 1780

Parole, Caswell. Countersign, Newbern-heuse

Of the Day To-morrow, Colonel HALL.

Colonel Williams, Inspector of the Maryland Division, having obligingly offered to act as Deputy Adjutant General to the Southern Army during the Illness of Major Armstrong, he is to be obeyed as such, and all Orders coming from Co^l Williams as Dep^y Adjutant Gen^l are to be obeyed.

The Majors of Brigade, Aids de Camp and other public Officers whose duty it is to receive the General Orders of the Day, will attend the Dep^y Adj Gen^l daily, at Eleven O'Clock in the Forenoon and Five in the Afternoon, for Orders.

The Commanding General is ready to issue one-half Pound of Meale to each Man of the Maryland Division and those who marched to the Camp yesterday.

The Commanding Officers of Brigades will order their Men's Arms and Ammunition to be inspected this Evening, and make Returns of what is Wanting.

The Colonel of Artillery will see everything in Order for Action.

The Army will be prepared to take a different Position and to encamp in a Body. The Grand Camp is Marking out, — proper notice, will be given for removing to it.

The General hears with astonishment, the shameful Irregularity of the troops in straggling from Camp, and Marauding in a most Scandalous Manner, even stealing the Cloathing and Furniture of certain Inhabitants whom the Calamaties of War had already rendered but too miserable.

The General expects the Commanding Officers of Regiments and Corps will order the Rolls to be called Four Times a Day, and confine for Disobedience of Orders, all such as are not present at Roll calling. — The General wishes the Officers to consider that they are but fifteen miles from the Enemy's Camp, and how much their Honor and the Interest of the United states may be affected by the Soldiers being suffered to commit such enormous irregularities. The First Soldier that is convicted of robbing and plundering the House of any Inhabitant shall suffer Death.

CAMP DEEP CREEK X ROADS,
7th August 1780

Parole, Anson. Countersign, Blanford, Craven.

Of the Day To-morrow,....Colonel ARMSTRONG.

The Army is to encamp in the following Manner till further Orders. The Maryland Division, commanded by the Baron de Kalb, on the Right Artillery

in the Centre

The Division of North Carolina Troops commanded by the Hon^{ble} Major Gen^l Caswell on the left.

The Cavalry and Light Troops will occupy such posts as the Commander in Chief shall from Time to Time Direct.

The Picquet and other Guards shall

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be occasionally appointed by D A Gen^l and posted by him or the officers of the Day.

Camp Guards, consisting of a Subalterns Guard to each Brigade to be immediately established, and proper Centinels posted in Front and Rear of each Regiment.

The Guards are to have the Parole and C Signs, and to be visited by the Officers of the Day.

All Waggons of the Army are to be uniformly drawn up in the Rear of the respective Brigades to which they belong, and a Sergeant's Guard appointed to each.

One Brigadier General, one Field Officer, and one Brigade Major of the Day to be appointed in future. — The Grand Parade will be occasionally appointed in Orders, where the officers of the Day will attend and see the Guards properly relieved.

Whenever the Troops are to march, the New picket Guard will join and Form the Vanguard of the Army. The Old Picquette in like Manner are to form the Rear Gud.

The Brigade Camp Guards will march immediately in the Rear of their respective Brigades, and will be employed occasionally as Flankers. All other Guards whatever (except the Commissary's Bullock Guards), are to join the Corps to which they belong at beating of the General; and all Officers are strictly enjoined to pay the most exact Obedience to this order.

Every Guard in the Army is to be relieved at Troop beating Daily, or once in two Days at farthest.

As the pursuit after the Enemy will be rapid, and should be facilitated with the least possible Obstruction, the General desires the Maryland Division will prepare to send off all heavy and superfluous Baggage to Charlotte.

All the Sick and Convalescent Officers and Soldiers are to go to the Town of Charlotte, where a General Hospital will be forthwith established. — General Caswell will please to give the like Orders in his Division, with this only Difference, that he place to which he chooses to send his Superfluous Baggage and Invalids, is left to his option.

Colonel Armand with his Legion, Co^l Porterfield's Infantry, and the Light Infantry of Major Gen^l Caswell's Division, will immediately proceed to Lynch's Creek. And the Army will march by the Left To-morrow Morning. The General will be at 3 o'clock. The Assembly at half and Hour after, and the March as soon as the Troops are paraded.

HEAD QUARTERS
CAMP LYNCH'S CREEK
8 August 1780

Parole, Saratoga. Countersigns, West Point, Stony Point

Of the Day To-morrow...Brig Gen^l SMALLWOOD, Co^l ADAMS, B. M. DAVIDSON.

A Detachment of the Army will assemble this afternoon at Sunset in the Main Road by Head Quarters, to be commanded by Colonel Hall, who will wait on the Commander in Chief for Instructions.

The Troops are to receive One and an half pound of Beef per Ration till further Orders.

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As much may depend upon the Compactness and Regularity in which the Army encamps, the Troops will constantly march to the Ground mark^d for their Encampments; they will there draw up and remain under arms; and the officers will remain with their respective commands until the Regiments and Guards are posted. The General requests the General Officers commanding Divisions and Brigades will be exact in occupying the Ground only which is marked out for their Encampments.

HEAD QUARTERS
CAMP LYNCH'S CREEK
9th August 1780

Parole, York. Countersigns, Newport, Fairfield

Of the Day To-morrow, B. Gen^l Gists, Co^l. Woolford, B. M. Brice.

The Detachment under Colonel Hall will march this Morning. Major Deane will take charge of the Sick and heavy Baggage of the Maryland Division, and conduct the whole to Charlotte. — The Sick to be attended to by Doctor Warfield, who is appointed to Superintend the Hospital at Charlotte till further Orders — All Persons bring Flour, Meale, Cattle, Rum or Salt are immediately to report the Quantity and Quality to the Commissary Gen^l of Issues, W^m. Pendergast, Esq^r, that a fair and equal Distribution may be made

of the Same to all Officers and Soldiers, without any preference or partiality to particular Corps — Every General Officer and Officer Commanding must see the Justness and Propriety of this Order; the General has not therefore the least suspicion that any Person whatever will endeavor to counteract it —

The Troops are to be prepared to march at the Shortest Notice — They will march by the Right, General Smallwood's Brigade in Front.

AFTER ORDERS

The Troops are to March To-morrow Morning at 4 o'clock — The General will beat at half an Hour after 3 o'clock. Major M^cGill is appointed an Extra Aid de Camp to the Commander in Chief, and is to be obeyed as such — The Troops will this Evening receive an equal Proportion of Meal or Flour, according to the Quantity arrived in Camp.

HEAD QUARTERS LYNCH'S HEIGHTS

10th August 1780

Parole, Ireland. Countersigns, Dublin, Limerick

Of the Day To-morrow, B.Gen^l RUTHERFORD, Col^o. FORD, B. M. LEWIS

The Commanding officer of Artillery will order a six pounder to be fired at Sunset, when all the Drums of the Different Regiments are to beat the Retreat in the Front of their respective Encampments.

The General does in a particular Manner direct all Officers Commanding Regiments to be exact in examining their Arms and Ammunition, and expects they will carefully report all Deficiencies.

At five o'clock this Evening the Arms that have been loaden, and cannot be

drawn, are to be discharged in a Volley at the Front of each Division — and no person is to presume to fire but in that Order, or by command of his Officer.

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AFTER ORDERS

The Troops are to receive one gill of Rum and one Pound of Flour per Man this Afternoon. — A Detachment will be immediately form^d, to be Commanded by Colonel Adams, who will receive his Orders at Head Quarters.

The Whole Army is to be held in Readiness to parade at the Shortest Notice. The Troops will constantly assemble their Alarm Posts in Front of their respective Brigades at the beating of Reveille and upon every alarm. The General hopes to find his Officers and Men alert, and always prepared for Action. The Troops are to receive half a Jill of Rum per Man this Morning.

HEAD QUARTERS CAMP LYNCH'S
HEIGHTS 11th August 1780
4 o'clock A.M.

The Army will march this Morning by the Left.

The Artillery and Baggage in the Rear, covered by Gen Butler's Militia, and the Cavalry and Infantry under Co^l Armand and Lieu^t Co^l Porterfield.

HEAD QUARTERS 11th August 1780

Parole, Rock Mount. Countersigns, Sumter, Success

Of the Day To-morrow, B.Gen Gregory, Col Collier, B. M. Parker.

6 o'clock the March is to be performed in the following Order —

1st Brigade North Carolina Militia
The Baggage of the Whole Army
The Park of Artillery
2^d Brigade of North Carolina Militia
Maryland Division
General Butler's Brigade of Militia

AFTER ORDERS

LITTLE LYNCH'S CREEK
Marshall's Farm

The Waggon Master General will immediately take all the best Waggon Horses in Camp and return with the Brigade Waggon-Masters and bring up the Artillery Ammunition and Baggage that was unavoidably left on the March. The Army is to be in Readiness to march on the Shortest Notice. — As there is an indispensable necessity for procuring a number of Horses to supply the places of those that have failed on the March. The General Expressly orders that all public Horses in Possession of officers who are not entitled to them, and all such as have been impressed or otherwise taken from the Inhabitants, be immediately given to Captain Marbury, D. Q. M. Gen^l, and appropriated by him to the Artillery and Baggage Teams — Such of the Horses as are unfit for Draught may be given to those Officers whose Duty requires their being mounted, and who have none of their own, till further Orders. 10 o'Clock P. M.

The Army will march To-morrow Morning by the Right. The Troops will assemble at 3 o'clock without beating of Drums or playing of Fifes, and with as little Noise as possible, and march in the following order:

1st, Gen^l Smallwoods' Brigade. 2^d, Baggage. 3^d, Artillery. 4th, Gen^l Gist's Brigade. 5^{thl}, Gen^l Caswell's Division. 6th, Col^o Armand's Legion with L^t. Col^o Porterfield's L Infantry. 7, North Carolina L Infantry. 8, Detachment under Colonel Adams.

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HEADQUARTERS
MARSHALL'S PLANTATION,
12 Aug^t 1780

Parole, Catawba. Countersigns, Charlotte, Salisbury

Of the Day To-morrow,...B Gen^l BUTLER, Col^o ALEXANDER, B. M. SHARP.

The March of the Army is postponed till 8 o'clock, when it will be performed in the following order:

- 1 Col^o Armand's Legion
- 2 Maryland Division
- 3 Park of Artillery
- 4 North Carolina Division

The Baggage of the Army will follow in like order, and L^t. Colonel Porterfield with all the Light Infantry will move on the Left Flank of the Army.

CAMP CLERMOUNT,
HEADQUARTERS RUGELY'S
13th August 1780

Parole, Monocacy. Countersigns, Baltimore, Frederick

Of the Day To-morrow,...B. G. . SMALLWOOD, Col^o URUM, B.M.
DAVIDSON

The Troops are to be under Arms To-morrow at beating of the Reveille, and continue at their Alarm Posts till further Orders. Two Guns fired at the Park of Artillery is the signal for an Alarm, and upon every such Occasion the Troops must stand to their Arms.

CAMP HEAD QUARTERS RUGELY'S
14 August 1780

Parole, Chester, Countersigns Winchester, Westchester

Of the Day To-morrow,...B Gen^l GIST, L^t Col^o Leadbetter, B. M. BRICE.

The Guards are to paraded Daily at Troop beating in Front of the Park of Artillery, and to be posted by the officers of the Day. When the Army marches in the Forenoon these Guards are to join and march under the command of the Field officer of the Day, as a Van Guard to the Army. — The Picquets of the preceding Day in like manner form the Rear Guard. — The Officers of the Day are to visit the Camp Guard, as well as the Picquets, twice in Twenty-four Hours, and see that the whole are properly posted, and vigilant in the Execution of their Duty.

M^r Edmund Compton, Ensign in the First Maryland Regiment, being entitled to the Rank of a Lieutenant since the ___ day of March last is on Duty and be obeyed as such.

A small seven Barrel^d Silver Mounted Pistol marked J V T was lost at the last encampment. — Major Hardman of the 6th Maryland Regiment offers a Reward of One Hundred Dollars to whoever will deliver it to him.

CAMP CLERMONT,
15th August 1780

Parole, Berkely. Countersigns, Williamsburgh, Wilmington.

Of the Day To-morrow, B. G. RUTHERFORD, L^t. Col^o HOWARD, B. M. LEWIS.

One pound Flour and one Gill of Molasses is to be immediately issued to every Officer and Soldier in Camp.

A Return of all the Sick unable to march to be delivered at the Orderly Tent at 3 o'clock this Day.

General Stevens with such of the Virginia Militia just arrived, to encamp in the Field South West of North Carolina Division.

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AFTER GENERAL ORDERS

The Sick the Extra Artillery Stores, the heavy Baggage and such Quarter Masters Stores as are not immediately wanted to march this Evening under Guard for Waxhaws, to this order, the General requests the Brigadiers General to see those under their command pay the most exact and Scrupulous Obedience.

Lieu^t Colonel Edmonds, with the remaining Guns of the Park, will take post and March with the Virginia Brigade under General Stevens. He will direct, as any Deficiency happens in the Artillery affixed to the other Brigades, to supply it immediately — His Military Staff and a proportion of his Officers with Forty of his men, are to attend him and awaite his Orders.

The Troops will be ready to march precisely at 10 o'clock in the following order — viz, Colonel Armands Cavalry commanded by Colonel Armand — Colonel Porterfield's L^t Inf^{ry} upon the Right Flank of Colonel Armand in Indian File, Two Hundred Yards from the Road — Major Armstrong's Light Infantry in the Same order of Colonel Porterfield's upon the left Flank of the Legion. Advance Guard of Fort composed of the advanced Picquets — First Brigade of Maryland — Second Brigade of Maryland — Division of North Carolina — Virginia Division — Rear Guard — Volunteer Cavalry upon the Flanks of the Baggage equally divided. In this Order the Troops will proceed and thus March this night. In case you attack the Enemy's Cavalry in Front, the Light Infantry upon each Flank, will instantly march up, and give and Continue the most galling Fire upon the Enemy's Horse — this will enable Colonel Armand not only to support the Shock of the Enemy's Charge, but finally to rout them — The Colonel will therefore consider the Order to stand the Attack of the Enemy's Cavalry be their Numbers what they may, as positive. — General Stevens will immediately order, one Captain, two Lieutenants, one Ensign, three Sergeants, one Drum and sixty Rank and File to join Col^o Porterfields Infantry. These men are to be taken from the most experienced woodsmen every way fitted for the Service. General Caswell will likewise Compleat Major Armstrong's L^t Infantry to their Original Number. These must be immediately marched to the advance Post of the army. The Troops will observe the profoundest Silence upon the March, and any Soldier who offers to fire without the Command of his officer must be instantly put to Death — When the ground will admit of it, and the near approach of the Enemy may render it necessary — the army will, when ordered, March in Columns — The Artillery at the Head of their respective Brigades, and the Baggage in the Rear — the Guard of Heavy Baggage will be composed of the remaining Officers and Soldiers of the Artillery one Captain two Subalterns, four Sergeants, one Drum and sixty Rank and File. And no person whatever is to presume to send any other Soldiers upon that Service. All Batmen waiters &c who are Soldiers taken from the Line are forthwith to join their Regiments and act with their Masters while they are

upon Duty. The Tents of the whole Army to be struck at Tatoo.

(Here follows a blank page in the Order Book.)

HEAD QUARTERS HILLSBOROUGH

31 August 1780

Parole, Arch. Countersign, Attention

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THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

1780

GATES AT CAMDENS

Since writing the article printed with this title in the last October number of the Magazine, my friend, Mr. Charles A. Campbell, has called my attention to a letter from an actor in the campaign which had not before fallen under my observation, and which corroborates every position assumed by me.

[This letter, written by General Thomas Pinckney from Clermont, 17th July, 1822, to the Hon. William Johnson](#), appeared in the August number of the Historical Magazine for 1866. The purpose of the letter was to defend General Gates against some of the charges brought against him by Mr. Johnson in his Life of General Greene. General Pinckney was an Aid-de-Camp of Gates during the Southern Campaign of 1780. After the war, he was Governor of South Carolina, and later Minister to the Court of St. James during the first administration of Washington.

The letter is of considerable length, and covers the entire period of the

campaign, from the time when Major Pinckney was transferred from the staff of Baron de Kalb to that of General Gates on the arrival of the latter at the camp near Coxe's Mills, and his taking command of the Army. "From that day," writes General Pinckney, "I was constantly with him until the fatal 16th of August. In this capacity I saw all the orders before they were issued; was employed in composing his proclamation and in some of his correspondence, particularly in a letter to Lord Rawdon on the subject of military usage, with respect to flags of truce and in dispatches to Gen^l. Sumter, &c. &c; which circumstances I mention to show the confidential footing on which I was placed by the General; whence I may have been acquainted with his views and intentions, although they were not disclosed to Co^l. Otho Williams, who acted as Adjutant-General." On the narrative of Colonel Williams Mr. Johnson relied for many of his facts and opinions in his incidental account of the disaster of Camden.

In this letter is clearly shown that Gates had no intention of making an attack on the enemy, but of taking a strong position near Camden, by which he could confine their hostile dispositions and cut

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off their supplies from the upper parts of the Wateree and Peedee Rivers, and thus compel them to retreat or come out and attack him upon a ground where the militia could be used to advantage. The plan of Gates Pinckney considers "to have been consistent with sound military principles," and the best in his opinion that could have been adopted.

With regard to the charge that Gates was not diligent to obtain precise information as to the strength of the enemy, General Pinckney testifies that he himself was one of the persons directed to obtain information, and that no opportunity was lost to secure complete intelligence; and he confirms what the Gates correspondence shows, that "Gates was not materially deficient in information of the enemy's force."

As to the personal conduct of Gates on the battle-field, Pinckney also testifies that in what "he witnessed while with him he saw no indication of want of presence of mind," and his account of the battle shows that until Gates was borne away from the field by the torrent of dismayed militia, he (Gates) had personally directed the movements of his army from "the head of the line."

Passing to a consideration of the route of march taken by Gates from Deep River, by Mask's Ferry on the Peedee, to Lynch's Creek, General Pinckney pertinently observes that "this was nearly the precise route which General Greene pursued the succeeding April, the country being in both cases destitute of provisions, owing to previous exhaustion of the natural sterility of a great part of the soil," and expresses his admiration for General Gates' prompt decision on arriving at De Kalb's camp, and being informed that the entire country had been stripped of provisions, that "we may as well March on and starve as starve lying here."

The whole of this important letter should be read by those who desire to arrive at a correct conclusion with regard to this important piece of history. It will be found a complete vindication of the military correctness of Gates' movements, and of his personal bearing on the field.

JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS

ENDNOTES

Added by John Robertson

100. "G1" was handwritten on the source copy of the article. It is not known who placed it there or what significance it has.
101. This map is described as being part of that engraved for Johnson's "Life of Nathanael Greene", but it differs considerably from that map, and

would be more appropriately described as "after" that map. It appears to have been traced from that map, relettered, omitting the marches of Nathanael Greene appearing in the original map. If it served any useful purpose: 1) A better copy of the map in the magazine article could be obtained, 2) The present map could be enlarged and the lettering could be replaced, or 3) a copy of the source map from Johnson's "Life of Nathanael Greene" could be obtained.

102. This account should be compared with [that transcribed by George Fields from a photocopy of the handwritten version](#). One difference that may be noted is a comment on activity by Armand in this version that is missing from the other.
103. Another account by Major McGill from this same source is found [here](#).
104. Alternative transcriptions of Gates letter to the President of Congress are found in the ["Documents by participants"](#) page of this site.
105. *This being the situation of General Caswell and myself at a pass* does not appear in the [other transcriptions of this letter](#).
106. [Another transcription](#) reads *No sooner the Enemy Horse discovered the confusion, they charged (14) where Col. Armand (15) tried to oppose 'm, but was too weak against 200 Horse, they wheeled to the right and left, took the 1st and 2nd Maryland Brigades in their flanks and rear (16)...*
107. This appears to include the repetition of a phrase (*I request the favor*) which may not have existed in the handwritten original.
108. This is a version of Senf's map which has been helpfully "cleaned up" for that publication. [The original map](#), in version available to this project, is very difficult to read.
109. It may be assumed that Gates signed his letters with the initials *H G*.

Someone, presumably John A. Stevens, replaced each such case with *H[ORATIO] G[ATES]*.

110. It may be assumed that Gates ended this message without the customary closing. Someone, presumably John A. Stevens, inserted *[I am &c]*, wherever it appears.

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